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TARIQ KHAN

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Translation Today (TT) is a double-blind peer-reviewed, indexed and refereed journal of the National Translation Mission (NTM). This has been listed in the UGC approved list of journals. It follows the standard publishing norms and therefore, invites original and unpublished submissions in the following categories:

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- Academic interviews
- Translations
- Disciplinary dialogues
- Book reviews
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- Seeks a spurt in translation activity.
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TARIQ KHAN

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Editorial

Translation, as an academic field, has been evolving multi-directionally; inclusively and exclusively. Consequently, the evolution and expansion of Translation Studies in consonance with its epistemology have been drawing the attention of scholars across disciplinary affiliations. The set of parameters for characterizing Translation Studies, its scope and its limitations have emerged as the main planks of the ongoing deliberations on this discipline. This can be well-witnessed with the current publications on translation as a theory and practice in book forms as well as in journal articles, seminars/conferences on many areas related to translation, research projects undertaken by institutions worldwide, and scholarships/fellowships offered by internationally renowned institutions. The present issue of Translation Today exemplifies this phenomenon.

The first paper titled *Translation and Beyond: Re-thinking Interdisciplinary Research in the Humanities* by Chandrani Chatterjee claims that "Translation Studies is still a discipline in the making." This paper explores the emerging trends and approaches in Translation Studies while paying special attention to interdisciplinary research. The second paper titled *Linguistic and Aesthetic Constraints in Literary Translation: Phonic Considerations in Translating Śabdaśakti-mūla dhvani* is by Amrutha M. K. This paper discusses how linguistic clogging creates linguistic and aesthetic constraints on translations with the analysis of literary expressions with śabdaśakti-mūla dhvani (SSMD) where the literal and suggested meanings are entirely different. The third paper titled *On Some Aspects of Translating Children's Literature in Contemporary India* is by Umesh Kumar. This paper provides a theoretical account of translating Marathi children's literature into Hindi with special reference to Kisson Ki Duniya: Marathi Baal Kahaniyon Ka Pratinidhi Sankalan (2019) (The Landscape of Tales: Selections from Marathi Children's Stories). The fourth paper titled *Transcreating the Bard: A Case Study of William Shakespeare's Romeo and*

Juliet in Hindi Celluloid by Glenis Lenis Mendonca discusses how the varied adaptations of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet in Hindi celluloid are not mere adaptations but rather transcreations.

Under the Note section, there are two notes, the first one by P. P. Giridhar on *Translatology: What Hobbles It*. Giridhar puts forth a plea for a rational rigorization of the inner spaces of translation as a human phenomenon. The second one is titled *Kavya and Anuvad in the Age of Bhasha: Reading History of Bangla Literature* by Mrinmoy Pramanick. He discusses translation as the primary factor in the creation of Indian literature and Bangla literature in the medieval period by focussing on issues like the origin of language, linguistic and cultural identity, resistance, and the function of translation.

This issue also contains a book review on *Wenchao Su's Eye-Tracking Processes and Styles in Sight Translation* by Obed Ebenezer S. The translation section of this issue has two English translations. The first one is *Spark Tankho* by Himanshi Shelat in Gujarati (source) translated into English by Pratixa Parekh and the second one is *The Land Bhoomi* by Milind Bokil in Marathi (source) translated into English by Shubhada Deshpande.

Translation Today thrives on incorporating all dimensions of scholarly deliberation on translation and attempts to showcase the inclusiveness and exclusiveness of translation as a field of study theoretically and practically. To achieve this goal, the journal publishes a wide range of items pertinent to Translation Studies such as articles, notes, interviews, book reviews and annotated bibliographies. Hope this issue will be another milestone towards this end.

Read, think, explore and enjoy!!!!

Tariq Khan

***

Translation and Beyond: Re-thinking Interdisciplinary Research in the Humanities[1]

CHANDRANI CHATTERJEE

Abstract

Translation Studies is still a discipline in the making. Having undergone several transitions and transformations since the last decades of the twentieth century, the field is ever receptive to newer enquiries and experimentations. The present article attempts to explore several emerging trends and approaches in the field to suggest the possibility of identifying Translation Studies as an enabling space for interdisciplinary research in the humanities and social sciences. Increasingly, research in the social sciences and humanities programs worldwide is waking to the fact that it is impossible to work in isolation while protecting strict disciplinarian boundaries. The paper identifies Translation Studies as an inclusive space that can harbour research interests across disciplines. However, to enable such a possibility there are some basic reconfigurations that are necessary for understanding and defining the scope of Translation Studies as a discipline in particular and translation as a concept in general. The present paper attempts to lay the field for similar investigations for interdisciplinary research.

Keywords: Translation Studies, Translation, Discipline, Interdisciplinary, Social Sciences and Humanities.

Situating Translation Studies

In around the mid-twentieth century, renowned translation scholars Susan Bassnett and Andre Lefevre announced the 'cultural turn' in Translation Studies indicating the need for disciplines to join hands – in this case, they were pointing towards the merging of Cultural Studies and Translation

[1] Parts of the arguments in this article was initially formulated through a collaborative minor research project titled 'Interrogating Interdisciplinarity' carried out under the aegis of the Centre for Social Sciences and Humanities, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune.

Studies. This had wider implications much beyond the scope and purview of the above-mentioned disciplines alone and reaching far beyond Anthropology, Sociology, Ethnography, History, Psychology, and Philosophy to name just a few. In 'Writing Between the Lines: For example, John Sturrock (1990) claimed in The Language of Translation,' that Ethnography is no longer concerned with the description of other cultures but instead with their translation into a form comprehensible to the West (1996). In "Temporalité et traduction" (1989), Jean Laplanche uses the term *à traduire* to refer to that primordial unformed thought or image before it has been put into language (1989). In *Dissemination* (1981), Jacques Derrida states that the problem of translation is nothing less than the passage to philosophy (1989). Indeed, in this global age, translation has come to define the fragmented, post-modern human individual. In *Imaginary Homelands* (1991), Salman Rushdie famously says, "Having been borne across the world, we are translated men" (1991: 17), a statement that has been interpreted metaphorically by many cultural studies scholars, but one that we take quite literally these days. Humans can be translated just as well as texts.

Following such advances in research methodologies the present article hopes to shed further light on the interconnections between Translation Studies and other disciplines in the Social Sciences and Humanities hoping that this will open new possibilities of research across disciplines – a trans-disciplinarity of sorts that is a much-needed platform for enabling dialogues and facilitating border crossings across disciplines.

Edwin Gentzler, an eminent scholar in the field of Translation Studies and Comparative Literature is one of the major proponents of this approach. In several writings on translation, Gentzler has suggested the idea of 'translation without

borders' and what such an approach makes possible. In an essay titled 'Translation Studies: Pre-Discipline, Discipline, Inter-Discipline and Post-Discipline' (2014) Gentzler takes a critical stock of the various shifts in Translation Studies from before it was envisioned as a discipline to what is now being understood as the 'post-disciplinary' phase. The post-disciplinary phase is further explored in the book *Translation and Rewriting in the Age of Post-Translation Studies* (2017) where Gentzler suggests the possibility of thinking of rewriting as translation and elaborates on 'post-translation studies' as the way ahead through rewritings of Shakespearean play texts in Germany and China, the many postcolonial renditions of Faust and other examples. Though the post-translation phase has drawn a lot of academic attention and debate, it is the inter-disciplinary phase that is of concern in this article. In fact, the inter-disciplinary phase in Translation Studies, as Gentzler's essay points out, remains underexplored and requires critical scholarly attention. According to Gentzler, "The first move toward interdisciplinarity in translation occurred within the field during the early 1990s, what might be called intra-disciplinary translation studies, or interdisciplinary studies within varying disciplines of translation studies. After two decades of fighting between linguistic-oriented branches and literary-oriented branches, translation studies began to coordinate and respect varied approaches. In 1988, Mary Snell-Hornby published *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach* or later in an anthology edited with Franz Pöchhacker and Klaus Kaindl, *Translation Studies: An Interdiscipline* (1994) combined literary, linguistic and cultural studies approaches, allowing for different types of approaches depending upon the nature of the text to be translated. For example, a literary text might allow more innovation and creativity in translation than a scientific text, in which there might be less variance and innovation […]. Translation

suddenly had many partners and collaborators, and it was a very fruitful period. By borrowing ideas and concepts from other disciplines, translation studies scholars were able to gain great insight into additional translational phenomena, and the field experienced another boom" (Gentzler 2014).

The many well-known titles in this phase include Sherry Simon's *Gender in Translation* (1996), *Translation and Gender* by Luise Von Flotow (1997), Douglas Robinson's *Translation and Empire* (1997), *Translation and Minorities* edited by Lawrence Venuti (1998), *Postcolonial Translation* edited by Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi, *Deconstruction and Translation* by Kathleen Davis (2001), *Translation and Religion* edited by Lynne Long (2005) among others in this ever-burgeoning field. Translation Studies continued to join hands with Ethics, Psychology, Philosophy and Media Studies leading to new scholarly publications.

In spite of this ever-expanding field and the forays made therein, translation is seldom thought of as a lens through which interdisciplinary research in the humanities can be viewed. The present article attempts to bring forth the need to create a discourse around interdisciplinary research in the humanities through translation. Thus, what I propose in this paper is not conventionally understood within the framework of translation; but my argument, like several scholars within and outside the discipline at present, is the need for witnessing and acknowledging the increasing importance of translation in our lives.

Two Instances of Reconceptualizing Translation

The Austrian-born American historian Gerda Lerner (1920-2013) in her essay 'Living in Translation' which forms a chapter in her 1997 book *Why History Matters* discusses her troubled relation to her first language (a variety of German spoken before the Nazi regime) and English which she learnt

after she came to the United States as a refugee in 1939 for making a livelihood. In an interesting moment, Lerner raises an important and not-so-familiar question regarding losing one's first language:

> If you are forced to give up your mother tongue, what is lost? In a way, losing one's mother tongue is inconceivable—one assumes one can always return to it. But Lerner's example shows that it is not so. Language *is* not a dead body of knowledge; language changes year by year, minute by minute; it lives and grows. In order to remain adequate, it must be spoken and it must be read. When you lose your language, you lose the sound, the rhythm, the forms of your unconscious. Deep memories, resonances, and sounds of childhood come through the mother tongue—when these are missing the brain cuts off connections. Language communicates much more than literal meaning.[2]

Lerner's plight may seem alien to us at the outset. But having used this essay as a text to be studied for my postgraduate course in translation theory and practice I have realized that her case is similar to ours. English is somewhere between most of our first language and second language and yet more often than not for a variety of reasons we tend to forget that our first language occupies but a minuscule space in this world of languages. It seems to me that one of the age-old binaries of the 'original' and 'translation' becomes limiting when we start thinking that all languages in the world are first languages. An appreciation of the multiplicity of languages, and the modes of knowledge their syntactic and semantic structures make possible, is essential before we even begin to talk about

[2] Gerda Lerner. 'Living in Translation' in *Why History Matters*. p 39.

translation.[3] If we agree on this, it seems to me, there will be greater freedom in exploring the 'translational' possibilities beyond the domain of the written and the literary to which translation still seems to be restricted.

An instance of this moving beyond the written and the literary can be seen in Rabindranath Tagore's understanding of translation. Repeatedly in his writings both before and after the Nobel, we find Tagore commenting on his approach to translation. In *Chhinnapatra*, for example, he poses translation's impossible choices, in this case, with the title. It could mean scattered leaves, torn-out pages, or torn-up letters. In this volume, a middle-aged Tagore is going back to a set of letters he had written between his mid-twenties and mid-thirties — most of them to a niece, who was then in her teens. He arranges fragments from these letters in a sequence that creates a delicately balanced effect of randomness. Published in 1912, a year before the Nobel, *Chhinnapatra* is an elusive mix of diary, travelogue, anthology and novella, autobiography and fiction.

In a letter of December 2, 1892, Tagore actually uses the Arabic-Bengali word for 'translation' — *torjoma* (rather than the more literary *onubaad*). He had gone up to visit his friend,

[3] Ganesh Devy's work on documenting, recognizing and preserving the dignity of the innumerable languages of India may be regarded as a mammoth example in that direction. To recognize and acknowledge the dignity of all languages, particularly those that have not been accorded official status, is a step towards the plural trajectories through which knowledge systems are available in the human world and yet some forms are validated through official sanctioning. To be able to engage in translations in the true sense is to be able to engage not only with languages as fixed, unchanging units, but to be engaging with humanity, the users and carriers of those languages and a plethora of contexts and situations in which such language use is imbricated. A study of languages, cultures and translations thereby would need to go beyond the written and the standardized.

the maharaja of Natore. Describing an evening stroll, he talks about the music of nature and the harmony that it creates. Here he uses the word 'translation' in a strikingly unconventional way, "Gazing fixedly for a long time, I think that if this silence lying wide across the Earth is not able to bear itself any longer, and cleaves to let its ur- language out suddenly, what a deep, sombre and serene music, full of beauty and pity, would be heard then, from the Earth to the realm of the stars! This is actually happening. If we sit still and try to concentrate a little, we will be able to translate the vast harmony of the world's gathered light and colour into immense music."

Tagore's use of translation does not describe a linguistic operation. He uses translation as a metaphor for a mode of perception, in which the language of music is used to depict a vision of the created universe. 'Harmony' is the English word that Tagore also uses at this point, but written in Bengali. He does this frequently in the *Chhinnapatra* text, where one can get a sense of the voices and textures of bilingualism by making two very interesting lists: English words and phrases printed in English, and those printed in Bengali. Through this half-metaphorical, transliterated, but untranslated, use of 'harmony', the idea of translation is taken beyond its immediate linguistic and literary realization towards the exploration of a different kind of relationship between East and West — a theme that runs through *Chhinnapatra* like a hidden stream. Towards the end of the aforementioned letter, Tagore writes, "One can experience it anew in different ways, but how can one express it in new ways." He is of course talking of the sunrise and sunset and the experiences in nature. However, what is striking is the untranslatability that Tagore suggests between experience and articulation, or between experience and language that communicates that experience. The incommensurability between experience and its articulation in language opens up further nuances in the field. Somewhere it

seems to me that Tagore is suggesting this dichotomy – the language of experiencing as opposed to the language of articulating and how these cannot be thought of as equivalents. In hinting at this incommensurability, Tagore's idea of translation goes beyond equivalences and literal renderings to a more holistic possibility of envisioning translation that could move across boundaries of thought and articulation, imagination and music without hesitation. Existence of such a possibility could perhaps be looked upon as the beginnings of borderless translations – a domain of free exchange and movement across concepts, ideas, philosophies and disciplines. It seems to me that much before the interdisciplinary phase in Translation Studies, Tagore was suggesting the possibility of going beyond the commonsensical understanding of translation, as a linguistic exercise to a more universal and philosophical rendering of translation.

In fact, in a different and yet similar way, Tagore while describing his translations of *Gitanjali* keeps harping on his uncomfortable relation with English and lifts the definition of translation far from its linguistic model to a process of trans-creation, bordering on mysticism. As Rosinka Chaudhuri shows, translating a letter of Tagore written from London on May 6th, 1913, 'You have written to me about my English translations of *Gitanjali*. How I wrote them and why people liked them so much I still cannot quite comprehend. That I cannot write English is such a plain fact that I never had the pride to ever feel ashamed of it. If anybody wrote to me in English inviting me to tea, I didn't have the courage to even write a reply. You're thinking perhaps that I have rid myself of the illusion [maya] today – absolutely to the contrary – that I

have written in English seems to me to be the illusion [maya].'[4]

Tagore's discomfort in using the English language has been commented on and debated by several well-known scholars. However, it seems to me that not only is Tagore articulating a personal discomfort, but he is also challenging the accepted notions of translation. As evident in the letter in *Chhinnapatra*, Tagore associated translation with a larger creative phenomenon where language is but one component. The same idea seems to have been at work in the English translations of Gitanjali - free creative transcreations. Tagore urges us to rethink the nature and utility of translation to understand the organicity of languages. In a later work, *Bangabhasha Parichay* (1938), Tagore would evoke a continuum of language discourses connecting Bengali to Arabic, Persian and the different colloquial registers of an otherwise standardized language. It is enabling us to go back to Tagore to widen our notions of translation and the organicity of languages and literatures in the contemporary world.[5]

In fact, the idea of border crossings, be it in terms of languages, disciplines or ideas is at the core of Tagore's creative oeuvre in general. As Swati Ganguly shows us in her study of the making of Tagore's university, that Visva-Bharati may be regarded as a culmination of the essences that Tagore's life and works upheld - the necessity of going beyond the

[4] Quoted in Rosinka Chaudhuri (ed.) *A History of Indian Poetry in English*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016. p 130.

[5] Some of the ideas presented here in terms of the ramifications of the word and idea 'translation' as a pedagogic tool in the Indian classroom was part of an ICSSR sponsored collaborative research project on 'Popular Imaginaries and Discourses on Politics in India' (2017-2019).

narrow limitations of linguistic, cultural and intellectual boundaries.[6]

In both the above instances, translation is used as an imaginative category beyond mere transference of meaning. Gerda Lerner and Rabindranath Tagore predate what would be later known as the interdisciplinary phase in Translation Studies. However, their idea of translation as a mobile, shifting entity with possibilities of crossing conceptual and disciplinary borders is visible in the examples cited above.

Translation Studies: Towards Interdisciplinary Interfaces

The growth of Translation Studies as a separate discipline, in the western academic world, is a success story of the 1980s and yet Translation Studies continues to be a discipline in the making. This is primarily owing to the changes and innovations that the discipline has witnessed in the last few decades. Moreover, the acts of translating and translation teaching have, until fairly recently, been kept separate from 'research' into these and related activities. The polarization is historical and is evidence of the misleading demarcation lines that are often too readily drawn between theory and practice in many disciplines. Theory and practice are ultimately complementary and, particularly in a field such as Translation Studies, the distinction needs to be re-examined. Another obstacle in the development of Translation Studies has to do with a distinction traditionally made between linguistics and the range of disciplines within which translation is studied. This somewhat arbitrary division has been the main obstacle to the fostering of an interdisciplinary approach to the study of translation as an important form of intercultural communication. Translation Studies brings together work in a

[6] See Swati Ganguly, *Tagore's University: A History of Visva-Bharati 1921-1961*. Permanent Black in collaboration with the New India Foundation and Ashoka University: 2022.

wide variety of fields, including linguistics, literary studies, history, anthropology, psychology, economics and many others. Translating is a multifaceted activity, and there is room for a variety of perspectives. This might conceivably be seen as the fragmentation of the discipline, but evidence points to the other way. Consider, for example, how cultural studies and text linguistics, each in its own way, have recently begun to address the issue of ideology in translation. Despite such developments, it is disappointing to encounter discussions that still want to evaluate translations on the basis of the equivalence model, primarily on the original-translation binary.

In fact, understanding the word translation in its widest sense – as a transfer, a crossing or ferrying across; and a deliberate moving away from the evaluative parameters suggested by the linguistic model of the original and the translation, where the loss is always implicated in the translation, will perhaps be the only way to come to terms with the ever-expanding notion of translation in the contemporary world. It seems to me that the more we can move beyond the strictures of the original-translation binary, the greater will be the possibility of perceiving what I have called elsewhere the 'enabling' aspect of translation. Translations enable certain forms of communication – the possibility of dialogues and crossovers. As Emily Apter appropriately points out, the need for cultural translation in a world that is increasingly intolerant towards the 'other'. Current geopolitical, religious and other kinds of conflicts have thrust us into 'the translation zone', a highly hazardous area where mistranslation has deadly consequences. Judith Butler too evokes the concept of cultural translation in understanding political ethics. In *Conversations on the Left* Butler notes, "the very concept of universality compels an understanding of culture as a relation of exchange and a task of

translation."[7] Taking more seriously the task of the translator and the responsibilities of the global citizen, Butler speaks in *Precarious Life* of the way in which the subject is both constituted and transformed in the moment of contact that both solicits, and offers, recognition of others.[8] Without translation, a transformative encounter with otherness cannot occur.

Butler is suggesting a need to revisit translation by looking at the repercussions of translations in the target culture, that explain the socio-psychological impact, and show how those imported ideas inform and contribute to many fields, including art, architecture, politics, and social policy. Translation is more than a metaphor; it is a concrete social and ideological activity that exerts an enormous impact on policies of social inclusion and exclusion. To be sure, communication problems exist, but often linguistic and cultural incommensurabilities can lead to new meanings and generate new forms. The question is not just how texts are chosen, adapted and received in any given culture, but also how people adapt, adjust, and develop in their new homes. For such an analysis, Translation Studies scholars need to go beyond their fixed set of translation methodologies and expand their repertoire of observational and analytical skills.

What I am suggesting are the several ways in which translation can become a possible point of departure and association for other disciplines, concepts and ideas that were hitherto not thought of as having any bearing on and relation to translation.

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[7] Judith Butler, "Restaging the Universal: Hegemony and the Limits of Formalism," in *Contingency, Hegemony, Universality: Contemporary Dialogues on the Left*, ed. Butler, Ernesto Laclau, and Slavoj Zizek (London: Verso, 2000), 24-25.

[8] Judith Butler, *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence* (London: Verso, 2004), 44. Butler briefly revisits issues of cultural translation in the context of international feminisms in *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 227-31.

Susan Bassnett indicates a similar association between translation and comparative literature. In the concluding chapter of her 1993 *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction*, she remarks:

> As comparative literature continues to argue about whether it can be considered as a discipline or not, translation studies state boldly that it is a discipline, and the strength and energy of work in the field worldwide seem to confirm that assertion. The time has come for a reconsideration of the relationship between comparative literature and translation studies, and for a new beginning.[9]

Since then, we have witnessed a burgeoning of interest in such a 'new beginning'. In 1999 Susan Bassnett and Harish Trivedi came out with *Post-colonial Translation*, an anthology of essays by authors ranging from Arrojo to Vishwanathan showing the close relationship between colonization and translation, one dominated by European appropriation and domination. The following year, Sherry Simon and Paul St-Pierre published *Changing the Terms: Translating in the Postcolonial Era*, looking at both the dominant and imperialist forms of translation practised from the European side, and much looser, more diverse forms practised in local cultures under the shadow of global forces.

During the next two decades, many studies came in with research on cultures from the archipelagos of the Pacific to the deepest parts of central Africa, from the southern cone of South America to indigenous tribes in the far north. Nevertheless, the theory remained much the same: European Orientalizing practices vs. freer and foreignizing alternative

[9] Susan Bassnett. Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction. Oxford and Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1993. p 160.

practices. This often led to the problem that many postcolonial translation practices were reduced to the same. In Gayatri Spivak's words, representations of a woman in Palestine began to resemble those of a man in Taiwan! In many ways, linguistic, literary and cultural analysis is not enough. Other tools are needed, those that allow scholars to see both the textual data and, especially, that which cannot be said in textual forms because of historical and social forces.

Re-thinking Translation: Interdisciplinary Possibilities

While scholars outside the discipline are discovering translation anew culminating in research projects on *Gender and Translation* (Sherry Simon), *Cities and Translation* (Iain Chambers and Sherry Simon), *Translating Caste* and *Translating Desire* (Katha) in the recent past, there have been shifts and innovations from within the discipline itself. There are divisions among translation studies scholars regarding opening up the field to dialogues and re-conceptualizations. On the one hand, there is a need felt to broaden the boundaries and to go beyond conventional disciplinarian boundaries and yet there has been resistance towards this. However, increasingly it is being realized that it is counterproductive to limit discussions on translation to borders of disciplines. In fact, as Edwin Gentzler points out it is becoming increasingly necessary to widen the scope of the discipline, to think of translation without borders:

> Studies in semiotics suggest that borders tend to be more multiple and permeable than traditionally conceived. What if we erase the border completely and rethink translation as an always ongoing process of *every* communication? Translation becomes viewed less as a speech act carried out between languages and cultures, and instead as a condition underlying the

> languages and cultures upon which communication is based.[10]

Similarly, associations are being made with border and immigration studies, cultural and post-colonial studies, and film and new media studies – areas and disciplines hitherto not related to translation studies. Being a major proponent of such an approach, Edwin Gentzler suggests the need to open the field further to trans-disciplinary enquiries:

> Whereas translation studies might best be characterized as still dominated by an empirical, scientific form of theory, in which translations are analyzed and trends, norms, and/or universals posited, theory in other parts of the world is more derived from social and literary critical theory, in which Marxist, feminist, psychoanalytical, hermeneutical, structuralist, and post-structuralist interpretive techniques are applied to translated texts. Translators follow norms, but they also consciously and unconsciously take liberties and invent, sometimes making implicit references more explicit, adding material to explain cultural references, inventing new terms, expressions, and metaphors to glean new connections, and devising evasive routes to access implications otherwise too difficult or traumatic to articulate. Those who have taken the semiotic turn in translation are well equipped to unpack the translator's imagination as it solves problems, invents, and creates. Equivalents and substitutions do exist in translation, but so too do supplements and displacements. Scholars of future must be open to subtle connotations, repressed

[10] Edwin Gentzler. 2012. 'Translation without Borders', *translation: A transdisciplinary journal* http://translation.fusp.it/articles/translation-without-borders accessed on 15.09.2016

> meanings, lost etymologies, and deep cultural and spiritual references. Increasingly, translation studies scholars will gain through collaborative opportunities and research possibilities that propose to go beyond disciplinary boundaries and investigate overlapping zones of contact and exchange.[11]

Following Gentzler, it might not be overambitious to suggest that Translation Studies is becoming the much-needed breathing space for research in the social sciences and humanities. Any kind of interdisciplinary research would require essential epistemic shifts that are located in processes of 'unlearning'. This 'learning to unlearn', is probably the most important obstacle in the path of even comprehending interdisciplinary research. It is only through a similar process of unlearning, that we can move beyond the strictures of the original-translation binary and conceive of a possibility of looking upon Translation Studies as this ever-widening and inclusive space that thrives on dialogues and border crossings. Once we have agreed on the existence of such a possibility, can there be the scope of rethinking the metaphoric implications of such re-imaginings in strengthening interdisciplinary research in the Humanities and Social Sciences?

From Lydia H. Liu's fascinating study on the problems of translation in global circulation, we have learnt that language like any other material commodity does circulate in the global market and that the specific ways of circulation lead to meaning-making among the world's diverse languages and societies. If language is to be understood as a material commodity and linguistic transactions, translations being one form of transaction, as processes in reconstructing and

[11] Ibid.

continuing language, how does the relation between language and translation work? Can the original and the translation ever be identical? Will not the spatial and temporal relocation in itself require us to think of these as separate events requiring a questioning of the very issues of originality and authenticity in translation?

In the 'Foreword' to the recent, 2022 compilation of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's writings on translation titled Living Translation, brought out by Seagull Books to mark its fortieth year of publishing, Emily Apter talks about how in Spivak's long writing career, translation has featured as a 'central concern of the comparative humanities' that she practices. Spivak has written on a wide range of subjects ranging from comparative literature, subaltern studies and postcolonial theory to feminism and contemporary politics. In bringing together Spivak's writings on translation as a book, for the first time, the editors highlight not only the importance that translation has had in Spivak's career, but also the many ways in which translation as a concept recurs in and connects the various disciplines that Spivak writes about, and engages in, thus shaping in a way, the politics of the self and its comprehension of the world around. Apter points out towards the end of the 'Foreword', "There are many untranslatabilities operative in Spivak's writings on translation, but they arguably converge in a model of concept-labor – Spivak's signature task as a translator – that translates towards alterity; towards episteme-logics that do not yet exist."[12]

It seems to me that Spivak's writings on translation help us ponder once again, on the essentially interdisciplinary nature of translation as a concept and practice. In widening its

[12] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak Living Translation, ed. Emily Apter et al. Kolkata: Seagull Books, 2022. p xix

horizons further to become more inclusive, in reimagining linguistic equivalences, in emphasizing differences over similarities, in resisting rigid definitions of translation and in disseminating newer ways of knowing and questioning older epistemic and pedagogical practices, it is increasingly difficult to contain Translation Studies within disciplinarian boundaries. In fact, it will not be incorrect to suggest that translation acquires new meanings in the varied contexts in which it is used. Such plurality undoubtedly enhances the repertoire of translation. As discussed above, while this widening of the field continues and newer perspectives are thrown open for understanding the relevance of translation in our lives, some basic epistemic shifts are in order. It will not be wrong to say that Translation Studies is in the process of 'translating' itself, creating transformations in the ways in which the concept of translation is being renewed and made available in new formats and contexts. The present essay is a humble footnote in that direction.

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Linguistic and Aesthetic Constraints in Literary Translation: Phonic Considerations in Translating *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*

AMRUTHA MK

Abstract

By outlining two features of language termed 'lexical drift' and 'linguistic clogging' and employing certain explanatory concepts of classical Indian aesthetics, this study addresses the question of how phonic elements of language constrain or smooth the ways of translation. Linguistic clogging, the study argues, constraints translation of expressions with śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani, SSMD (phonic-based suggestion)[1]*, in two ways. As a semantic constraint, the presence of SSMD in source expressions impedes translation if unsatisfied with target expressions. Secondly, as an aesthetic constraint, it curtails the aesthetic pleasure for readers even if the semantic constraint is satisfied by paraphrasing the source expressions. This study, analysing verses in English, Sanskrit, and Malayalam languages with SSMD, illustrates that if the constraints are not satisfied in the target expressions, they bring down the quality of translation. Nonetheless, satisfying both these constraints, by recovering the literal and suggested*

[1] *Śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani* (*SSMD*) is a sub-variety of *dhvani* where *a figure of speech* is suggested because of the inherent power of words. The meaning that is different from literal and metaphorical is termed "*dhvani*" (suggested meaning). Around the ninth century CE, Ānandavardhana articulated the philosophy of aesthetic suggestion and systematically theorised the concept of *dhvani* (suggestion) in his magnum opus *Dhvanyāloka* (*Light on the Doctrine of Suggestion*). He argues that the significative power of words is of two types, *vācya* (literal) and *pratīyamāna* (suggestive). *SSMD* is generally translated as "*word-based suggestion*". In this paper, the author has translated *SSMD* as "*phonic-based suggestion*", as sound elements distinguish *SSMD* from other varieties of *dhvani*.

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meanings where possible, can improve the quality of translation.

Keywords: Indian Aesthetics, *Śabda-Śakti-Mūla Dhvani* (SSMD), Linguistic Clogging, Lexical Drift, Homonymy.

Introduction

In a world where a misplaced comma can turn one's fortune wheel, translation is a sail close to the wind. Even so, paying attention to the constraints on translation and understanding the parameters of its wind and climatic conditions can smooth the sail and contribute to its aesthetics and workability, and in time to come, improved machine translations. Translation, in general terms, is a rendition of meaning or content of expressions[2] from one language or one (communication) system to another; creative, accurate, and functional in good ones and not so or weakly so in the opposite (Kelly 1979; Malmkjær 2012; Venuti 2004). This study focuses on the human translation of texts and expressions of literary merits, argues that it is constrained by linguistic and aesthetic elements related to *śabda* or sound, and suggests few considerations[3] to smooth the sail.

At one end of the spectrum of human translation, there are source texts in mathematical, logical, or scientific languages whereas, on the other end, the texts are in natural languages having expressions with *suggested meaning*. In some cases, for example, in transposing mathematical or factual information expressed in one language to another, a plain literal translation of expressions may be sufficient. Translation in most of these

[2] "Expressions" is used in a broad sense here to include sentences or utterances in a language, non-linguistic communicative devices as in communication systems, and language-neutral propositions.

[3] Though confined to human translation, this study has implications for machine and non-human animal translations since *certain* phonic elements are common to all these.

cases could be smooth and plain sailing, for what it needs to preserve in the transition is the form or structure[4] of expressions only. Translation of literary works, on the other end, takes a different path; here, neither literal translation of forms of expressions nor content alone is sufficient. Capturing or *recovering* the network of words along with their meaning in a literary work and *discovering* or rendering them in another language require additional considerations (Ingarden 1973). This study argues that these considerations include phonic elements and shows that the suggestive power of words (*dhvani*) in a literary work creates semantic and aesthetic constraints, if unsatisfied with target expressions can impede translation, and in turn, offers how paying heed to these constraints can aid[5] translation.

Each human language has its own archetypal, characteristic, and distinct structural components, such as semantic, morphologic, syntactic, pragmatic, and phonologic features, that play a significant and often decisive role in contributing to the quality of translation. Linguistic constraints create a few verbal barriers related to these features in finding the balance between *recovering* the essence of a text and *discovering* it along these parameters in another language. A word can have, as the case is with literary expressions, a network of synonyms with specific nuances of meaning along these parameters in a

[4] Since form or structure guarantees the truth of mathematical expressions, form preservation is the only requirement in the case of translation of these expressions. For example, any translation (#>@, #, therefore @) that preserves the form of the following expression (p>q, p, therefore q) would be truth-preserving as well, and so would count as a good translation of the given expression. For an account of how these non-content-specific expressions are computed in classical AI and how content-specific expressions are computed in human cognitive systems and contemporary AI models, see Shea (2021).

[5] Detailed exposition and illustration of this is a topic of another paper in progress.

source language. Nevertheless, the lack of words with similar features in the target language to reveal those nuances and surface features make translation high and dry. Keats' (1820) famous line "Thou still unravished bride of quietness" from the poem "Ode on a Grecian urn" in the English language is taken as an example to illustrate this. The word "still" in the above line is polysemic; as an adjective, it means "motionless" and as an adverb, it means "yet" or "even now" implying to stand the test of time. A paradox is suggested as the urn continues to be "the unravished bride of quietness", and the urn is lifeless as if it is frozen in time. The artwork is free from the clutches of time, yet it simultaneously represents the past and the present. If the target expressions cannot capture this contour of polyseme with its multiple meanings, then those subtle nuances of meaning and the impression it has created in the original verse are lost in translation due to *linguistic clogging*.

Linguistic clogging, as introduced and argued for in this study, is a case of interpretive condition present in literary expressions with homonyms where the literal and suggested meaning of expressions are entirely different and take different inferential and narrative trajectories though connected through the vehicle(s). Linguistic clogging can happen at three levels; where the reader is not alert to both the meanings of the homonym, where the reader glides away from *recovering* the figure of speech, and where the translator understands the meanings but does not find words with similar *lexical drift* in the target expression. At the third level, linguistic clogging reaches its challenging form in disrupting the poetic suggestion of the verse. Even if the linguistic constraint is satisfied by paraphrasing[6], that is, compensated otherwise using literal

[6] Currie & Frascaroli (2021) have given a different account on the possibility of paraphrasing in poetry. However, the present author does not endorse it considering the arguments of and notions of meaning in this paper.

expressions in the translation, the aesthetic beauty cannot be maintained as such in literal translations.

We may note here that some scholars have labelled the translation of poetry as a "creative transposition" (Jakobson 2000), "transadaptation" (Wong 2012), or "transcreation" (Portela 2003). The linguistic features, "idiomatic or idiosyncratic word choices, contextually grounded utterances, ideologically problematic concepts" (Glynn & Hadley 2021:29) (Bassnett 1980), cultural issues (Min 2007), and aesthetic constraints make translation challenging and arduous. Though translators use various methods for translating poetic devices (Delabastita 1997; Lefevere 1992; Low 2011; Offord 1997; Reiss 1981), language-specific literary devices like paronomasia and double entendre build up linguistic constraints to a higher degree (Klitgård 2018). This difficulty arises because paronomasia and double entendre are phonology-based literary expressions. Paronomasia or pun is a rhetorical device that creatively employs multiple meanings of words, where "two strings of thought tied together by a purely *acoustic* knot" (emphasis added, Kostler 1964) usually to arouse laughter or amusement (Newmark 1988). A double entendre is a phrase that can be interpreted in more than one way. Because of the phonological features of puns, many scholars have retained puns in the category of literary devices with 'absolute untranslatability' (Min 2007).

O'Flaherty (1971) emphasized the need to preserve the details and "compactness" of the content in Sanskrit to English translation. He offered examples where verses with double entendre and puns are maintained within a square bracket in one translation. In contrast, by eliminating double meanings only the "essential" words are preserved in the other translation. Various scholars have made several successful attempts to show the presence and use of poetic suggestions in

Indian and Western poetry (Rustomji 1981; Sreekantaiya 2001). However, studies that use some explanatory concepts of classical Indian aesthetics in translation studies are limited. Translators like Catlin, Ganganatha, Krishnamoorthy, Ingalls, Masson, and Patwardhan have translated verses with poetic suggestions into the English language. Ingalls (1982) and Catlin (2006) have illustrated some of the problems encountered in the translation of Sanskrit poetry. Ingalls (1982) focused on the semantic constraints to translate verses with suggested meanings to the audience having different sensibilities of two different ages or cultures. In this study, Ānandavardhana's theory of suggestion is used to explain linguistic clogging in phonology-based literary expressions. In the case of phonology-based literary expressions like *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani* (hereafter *SSMD)*, there could be a lack of equivalent words in the target language resulting in linguistic clogging. The study consists of four topical sections, besides the introduction and conclusion. The first section, as an attempt to connect the concerns of the paper to insightful classical literature, introduces and elucidates the distinction between the literal meaning and the suggested meaning. The poetic suggestion in *SSMD* is discussed in the next section, which explains *lexical drift* and *linguistic clogging* in the source and target texts. The third section analyses verses with *SSMD* to show how linguistic clogging at the suggested level catches the wind. The fourth section is on the aesthetic concerns of translating *SSMD* and shows how figures of speech along with its aesthetic beauty slip away in the translation. The study ends with a remark on phonic elements and meanings and the broader applications of the explanatory link between the two.

The Distinction Between Literal Meaning and Suggested Meaning

Signs, like gestures, sounds, pictures, and words, are used for communication. These signs have two distinct components, one pertaining to the content and the other pertaining to the vehicle. In the same way, signs of verbal communication have two components, sound (*śabda*) and meaning (*artha*). Traditionally, language is conceived as "sound with meaning" (Aristotle 1963; Chomsky 2011). Nevertheless, meaning does not always have to be explicitly expressed in literary expressions. Especially in literary works and in non-literal conversations[7], meaning could be intended or implied but not expressed literally. In Indian aesthetics, this argument was first theorised around the ninth century CE by Ānandavardhana in *Dhvanyāloka*. Ānandavardhana says meaning which is essential to a literary work and admired by connoisseurs, has two varieties, the literal (*vācya*) and the implied (*pratīyamāna)*[8] (Ānandavardhana 1990: 74). Though the texts and expressions of literary merits creatively employ literal and implied meanings, only those expressions where the literal meaning (*vācyartha*) is subordinated and implied meaning

[7] Grice (1989), in the article "Logic and Conversation", presents cases of ordinary talk exchanges with implied meaning and considers this within the ambit of the *cooperative principle* and *conversational implicature*. In contrast, Ānandavardhana presents cases of implied meaning in literary expressions and develops an aesthetic theory based on them, with wider applications. Though both these theorists talk about implied meaning, the formulation, implication, and scope of the theories are entirely different. Currie & Frascaroli (2021) have given a different account on the possibility of paraphrasing in poetry. However, the present author does not endorse it considering the arguments of and notions of meaning in this paper.

[8] "*kāvyasya hi lalitocita-sanniveśa-cāruṇaḥ śarīrasyevātmā sāra-rūpatayā sthitaḥ sahṛdaya-ślāghyo yo 'rthas tasya vācyaḥ pratīyamānaś ceti dvau bhedau*" (Ānandavardhana, 1974, p. 6). (Source, Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages, hereafter addressed as "GRETIL").

with aesthetic appeal (*vyaṅgyārtham*) gets prominence are termed as "*dhvani*" or "*poetic suggestion*"[9].

The literal aspect of a word that is directly expressed is known in Indian linguistic tradition as "*vācaka śabda"* (*expressed sound*) of a word. *Vācaka śabda* gives the literal meaning (*vācyartha*) of a word through a function called *abhidhā (*customarily translated as "*denotative function*"*) and forms the first variety of meaning.* Due to different methods of language comprehension[10], the primary meaning of a word gets shared among the language users. However, there is no natural or necessary connection between sound and the meaning of a word (Saussure 1966). The *vācaka śabda* of a word can be used with a different sense or associations in other languages or even within the same language. For example, the word "*kalaṁ"* with phonetic transcription, /*kalam*/, as a noun in Malayalam means "pot"[11], as an adjective with gender neuter words in Sanskrit means "soft musical sound"[12] and, as a noun in Hindi means "pen"[13]. Two or more words with the same pronunciation and spelling can have different meanings in the same language as homonyms. The word "bark", which means "the outer layer of a tree", and "the sharp cry of a dog", for example, is a homonym. Although a word can have

[9] "*yatrārthaḥ śabdo vā tam artham upasarjanīkṛta-svārthau / vyaṅktaḥ kāvya-viśeṣaḥ sa dhvanir iti sūribhiḥ kathitaḥ //*" (Ānandavardhana, 1974, p. 18) (Source, GRETIL).

[10] The eight commonly used methods for grasping literal meanings are; "the usage of words by elders, direct statement of a trustworthy authority, grammar, analogy, lexicon, the rest of the passage in the context, explanation, and the syntactic connection with words already known" (Raja, 1969, p. 26)

[11] Malayalam is a Dravidian language spoken in Kerala, located in the southern part of India.

[12] The author is thankful to Dr. Shankar Rajaraman for this example.

[13] Hindi is an Indo-Aryan language spoken mainly in the northern part of India.

multiple meanings in a dictionary or mental lexicon, generally the context helps us decipher the intended meaning. The primary meaning of a word can be fixed by several determining factors such as compatibility, association, and purpose, as explained by Bhartṛhari in *Vākyapadīya*[14]. With these determining factors, the primary meaning of a word in a particular sentence can be firmly expressed. Besides, it is essential that the literal meaning is adequately conveyed in any translation (Baker 1992).

The suggestive aspect of a word, *vyaṃjaka śabda* (*suggestive sound*), is implied through a function called *vyañjana (suggestive function)* which gives the suggested meaning (*vyaṅgyārtham*) and forms the second variety of meaning. Ānandavardhana argues that this suggestive function distinguishes *dhvani* and *guṇībhūta-vyaṅgyam* (poetic expressions with literal meaning as prominent and implied meaning as subordinate). Further, he points out that great literature always communicates through suggestions and if properly understood, suggested meaning generates aesthetic pleasure in *sahṛdayas* (connoisseurs). Ānandavardhana classifies poetic suggestions into two types based on the differences in the suggestive components of expressions. In the first type, the literal meaning is discarded. The literal meaning, though not incongruous, is transferred to suggest a different content in the second type. *Saṃlakṣyakrama*

[14] "*saṃsargo viprayogaś ca sāhacaryaṃ virodhitā*
arthaḥ prakaraṇaṃ liṅgaṃ śabdasyānyasya saṃnidhiḥ // 2.315
sāmarthyam aucitī deśaḥ kālo vyaktiḥ svarādayaḥ
śabdārthasyānavacchede viśeṣasmṛtihetavaḥ // 2.316"
(Bhartṛhari, 1980, pp. 282-283) (Source, GRETIL).
"The indicatory factors for fixing the meaning are connection, disjunction, association, enmity, purpose, context, peculiarity, the proximity of another word, capacity, compatibility, place, time, gender, accent" (Mammaṭa, 1967, pp. 34-35).

dhvani (*suggestion of discerned order*) belongs to this second type of suggestion, where the order of apprehending suggested meaning and literal meaning is perceptible. In *saṃlakṣyakramadhvani* verses, the suggested meaning can be entirely different from the literal meaning.

Poetic Suggestion in *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*

In Indian aesthetics, Ānandavardhana presents a distinction between two phonology-based literary expressions; *śleṣa* customarily translated as "double entendre"[15] and is not a case of poetic suggestion, and *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani* (*SSMD) phonic-based suggestion,* a sub-variety of poetic suggestion. If two concepts are expressed simultaneously because of the power of a word, it is considered as "*śleṣa".* The domain of *SSMD*, which is a subvariety of *saṃlakṣyakrama dhvani*, is described thus: wherever a figure of speech is implied because of the suggestive power of the word, "this figure being implied by the inherent capability of the situation and not directly denoted"[16] (Ānandavardhana 1990: 294). In *SSMD*, when context fixes the meaning for a particular object, an additional non-contextual meaning is suggested. (Ānandavardhana 1974). There is a *lexical drift* from contextual meaning to non-contextual or *vice versa* in *SSMD verses.* 'Lexical drift'[17], the study terms as a movement of meaning from one word to another through the same phonic elements. It occurs, in the present case, when the expressed sound and suggestive sound

[15] Translated as "double entendre" by Krishnamoorthy. In the Cambridge dictionary, "double entendre" is defined as "a word or phrase that might be understood in two ways, one of which is usually sexual". The two ideas expressed through *śleṣa* need not have any sexual conotations.

[16] "*yatra tu śabda-śaktyā sāmarthyākṣiptaṃ vācya-vyatiriktaṃ vyaṅgyam evālaṅkārāntaraṃ prakāśate sa dhvaner viṣayaḥ*" (Ānandavardhana, 1974, p. 74). (Source, GRETIL).

[17] For a use of "lexical drift" in experimental psychology literature, see Mattys et al. (2010), and another one in linguistics, see Pullum (2006).

share the same phonic elements yet, indicate distinct meanings; literal and suggestive meanings respectively. The lexical drift along with the presumed figure of speech aid the reader in *discovering* that the additional meaning suggested is not inappropriate or inconsistent. Though there is a lexical drift in *SSMD* verses, distinct, unrelated meanings of homonyms *coexist* with each other. On this ground, Ānandavardhana suggests that "in order that the two meanings might not appear as entirely disconnected, we will have to postulate the relation of the standard of comparison and the object compared as existing between the two" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 79).[18] There are no connecting words[19] to indicate the presence of a figure of speech in *SSMD* verses; instead, it is suggested. Subsequently, a relation between the subject of comparison (*ūpameya*) and the object of comparison (*ūpamāna*) is suggested. The contextual meaning is the subject to which attributes are ascribed[20], and the non-contextual meaning is the object whose attributes are borrowed, which is suggested.

For the other subvarieties of *dhvani*, if the literal meaning is translated correctly, the literal meaning can give rise to suggestions even in the translated verse, just like the original. Furthermore, in cases where target expressions have poetic suggestions that are lacking in source expressions, translation can even outperform the source text (Sagan & Hofstadter 2009) and transform it into a new product (Bradley 1909). In general, satisfying both the semantic and aesthetic constraints

[18] "*śabda-śaktyā prakāśamāne satya-prākaraṇike 'rthāntare vākyasyāsambaddhārthābhidhāyitvaṃ mā prasāṅkṣīd ity aprākaraṇika-prākaraṇikārthayor upamānopameya-bhāvaḥ kalpayitavyaḥ*" (Ānandavardhana, 1974, p. 78). (Source, GRETIL).

[19] Connecting words like *iva* for *upamā*, (simile) *tu* for *vyatireka* (poetic contrast) or *eva* for *rūpakā* (metaphor)

[20] The subject to which attributes are ascribed is called "*tenor*" (Richards, 1936).

in the target expressions in line with the source expressions can improve the quality of translation.

Linguistic Constraints in Translating *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*

In *SSMD* verses, the literal meaning stands independent of the suggested meaning and is complete by itself. An array of suggestions apart from the literal meaning may arise because of the suggestive power of the homonym in such verses. As the literal and suggested meanings of expressions encoded within the same sound are entirely different, some readers might miss the suggested meaning or overlook them. If the reader captures the literal and suggested meaning and discovers the figure of speech suggested by the word, then there is no linguistic clogging. Here the suggestive power of words becomes a desirable feature that heightens the aesthetic beauty of the verse (See, Fig 1). Linguistic clogging becomes an undesirable feature of the expressions for those who miss capturing the suggested meaning. Linguistic clogging can happen at the following three levels.

1. The first stage of linguistic clogging happens when readers are not alert to both the meanings of the homonym. In such cases, the reader is unaware of linguistic clogging and focuses on the literal meaning. The suggested meaning is invisible here.
2. In the second stage, readers identify both meanings, yet they miss the relation between them and fail to discover the figure of speech. Here, the reader is aware of linguistic clogging but does not give the necessary attention needed to interpret the suggested meaning.
3. The third stage happens in translation, where linguistic clogging reaches its peak in disrupting the poetic suggestion of the verse. The translator is aware of linguistic clogging present in target expressions. However, translation fails to capture

suggested meanings due to the lack of equivalent words for conveying both the expressed and suggested meanings in the target language.

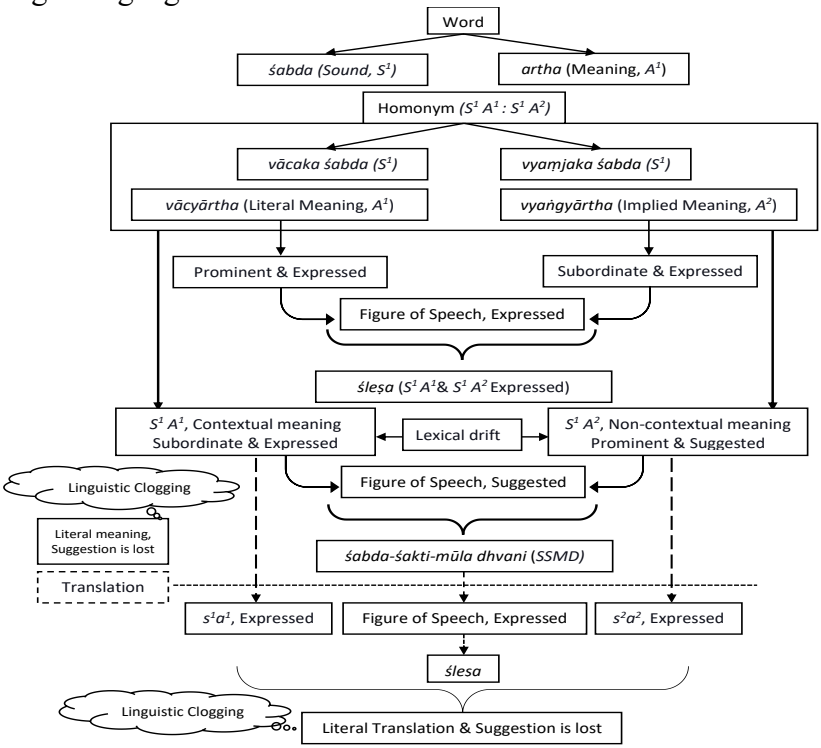

Figure 1. A pictorial representation of linguistic clogging in *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*.

Signs of verbal communication have two components; sound (*śabda*) and meaning (*artha*).

Homonyms- words with the same spelling and pronunciation [sound] (S^1) and different meanings (A^1 & A^2).

If two ideas or concepts are expressed simultaneously because of the power of the word, it is considered as "*śleṣa". If (*S^1 A^1*) & (*S^1 A^2*) be the two words presented by the homonym (SA), then (*S^1 A^1*) will be the expressed meaning which is prominent. (*S^1 A^2*) will be*

the suggested meaning which is subordinate. The figure of speech will be expressed literally in śleṣa.

Wherever a figure of speech is implied because of the suggestive power of the word, it is regarded as "*SSMD"*, "*phonic-based suggestion*". *If (*S^1 A^1*)& (*S^1 A^2*) be the two words presented by homonym (SA), then (*S^1 A^1*) will be the literal meaning which is subordinate. (*S^1 A^2*) will be the suggested meaning which is prominent. The figure of speech will be suggested in SSMD.*

In *SSMD,* there is a lexical drift between non-contextual meaning *(*S^1 A^2*) and contextual meaning (*S^1 A^1*)*

In the translation of *SSMD, if an equivalent homonym is not found in the target expression, then (*S^1 A^1*)& (*S^1 A^2*) can be paraphrased as (*s^1 a^1*)& (*s^2 a^2*), which would be a literal translation. In such cases, the figure of speech can no longer be suggested. Such cases are termed as "linguistic clogging", where the literal meaning is translated and suggested meaning is lost in translation. If the figure of speech is literally expressed in the translated expression, then the translated verse will be considered only as śleṣa and not SSMD.*

A passage in Sanskrit from Bāṇa's *Harśacarita* with the poetic suggestion is taken for literary analysis to illustrate linguistic clogging at the third level.

"*atrāntare kusuma-samaya-yugam upasaṃharann ajṛmbhata grīṣmābhidhānaḥ phulla-mallikā-dhavalāṭṭa-hāso mahā-kālaḥ*" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 78).

The literal meaning of the passage is as follows. In the meantime, (*atrāntare*), after putting an end (*upasaṃharann*) to the spring season (*kusuma-samaya*) which lasted for two months (*yugam*) expanded (*ajṛmbhata*) [the summer, *grīṣma*]. The long season (*mahā-kālaḥ*) named summer (*grīṣmābhidhānaḥ*) came with the wild laughter (*hāso*) of

Jasmine flowers (*phulla-mallikā*) that were making the palace terrace (*aṭṭa*) white (*dhavala*). In this passage, the expressed meaning is a description of the summer season. The author wants to convey that after putting an end to both months of Spring, the summer season has arrived. That makes the Jasmine bloom in such a manner that it seemed the palace terrace was laughing. The literal meaning of every word is set according to the context, which is the description of the summer season. Within that context, the word *mahā-kālaḥ* means a long period of time. Even though the compound word *mahākālaḥ* means Lord Shiva, the denotative power of the word *mahā-kālaḥ* is restricted to the meaning of its individual components *mahā* and *kālah* as "long season" because of the context. There are no linking words like *eva* or *iva* that will force us to choose the meaning that refers to Lord Shiva. Even though the primary meaning of the word *mahā-kālaḥ* is fixed as long season, the meaning of Lord Shiva also comes to our mind from the homonym *mahākālaḥ*. Accordingly, the suggested meaning of the Sanskrit passage quoted above is as follows. Meanwhile, (*atrāntare*) Lord Shiva (*mahākālaḥ*) whose wild laughter is white (*dhavalāṭṭa-hāso*) as jasmine blossoms (*phulla-mallikā*) aroused (*ajṛmbhata*) as he brought an end to aeons of time (*yugam upasaṃharann*). In *SSMD,* every word in the passage does not relate to the suggested meaning. When Lord Shiva is taken as the suggested meaning for *mahā-kālaḥ* then the description of the season called summer (*grīṣmābhidhānaḥ*) will not fit with the suggested meaning. The aesthetic delight of the passage does not stop just by the attribution of the meaning of Lord Shiva to the word *mahākālaḥ*. It goes to the extent of suggesting the similarity between the summer season and Lord Shiva through the suggested metaphor (*rūpaka alaṅkāra*)[21]. In such cases, the

[21] *Ābhidhāna* (named) is usually used in *rūpaka alaṅkāra*. The author is thankful to Dr. Shankar Rajaraman for this insight.

suggested meaning cannot stand independently without the presence of a figure of speech. There could be expressions with lexical drift without suggesting a figure of speech, but the suggestion of a figure of speech makes *SSMD* stand out of its kind.

In most cases of literal translation of *SSMD* verses, a lack of a figure of speech might lead to ambiguity. To avoid interpreting the meanings of homonyms as entirely disconnected meanings, the reader imagines a suggested simile along with it. Therefore, similar properties of summer and those of Lord Shiva are suggested in this passage. Just like summer puts an end to the spring season, Lord Shiva puts an end to the aeons of time. The suggestion of a figure of speech removes the ambiguity, and the gentle touch of the suggestion brings out aesthetic delight in the readers. A similarity-based relation is established between the contextual and non-contextual meanings. Likewise, any other figure of speech where we could assume a relation of the standard of comparison and object compared through suggestion can be taken as an example for *SSMD*[22].

It is also not true to say that the figure of speech present in the verse is because of *inference*. If the method of cognition was through *inference*, then we will get only the contextual literal meaning which we can infer from the context. *Inferring* a non-contextual meaning is not possible because it will result in ambiguity. In *SSMD* verses, distinct, unrelated meanings are recognised from the creative use of homonym. In such cases, a relation between the contextual and non-contextual meaning can be identified due to suggestion. In Keats' famous line, "Thou still unravished bride of quietness", the word 'yet' is a

[22] "*anye 'pi cālaṅkārāḥ śabda-śakti-mūlānusvāna-rūpa-vyaṅgye dhvanau sambhavanty eva*" (Ānandavardhana1974: 78). (Source, GRETIL)

polyseme[23]. Hence, there is a lexical drift from one meaning to another. There is no subject of comparison (*ūpameya*) and the object of comparison (*ūpamāna*). Even so, the figure of speech paradox is suggested, and it brings a creative, expressive touch to the verse.

The following discussion of a Sanskrit verse from Mayūra's *Sūryaśataka* with poetic suggestion shows how linguistic clogging appears in the translation of *SSMD*.

> "*dattānandāḥ prajānāṃ samucita-samayākṛṣṭa-sṛṣṭaiḥ payobhiḥ*
> *pūrvāhṇe viprakīrṇā diśi diśi viramaty ahni saṃhāra-bhājaḥ /*
> *dīptāṃśor dīrgha-duḥkha-prabhava-bhava-bhayodanvad-uttāra-nāvo*
> *gāvo vaḥ pāvanānāṃ parama-parimitāṃ prītim utpādayantu* //[24]" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 78)[25].

In this verse, the expressed meaning is a description of the sun. Sun's rays (*dīptāṃśor gāvo*) bring delight to all people (*dattānandāḥ prajānāṃ*) by absorbing (*ākṛṣṭa*) water (*payobhiḥ*) at the right time (*samucita-samayā*) [summer season] and releasing (*sṛṣṭaiḥ*) water (*payobhiḥ*) at the proper time (*samucita-samayā*) [rainy season]. The sun's rays

[23] For more on the distinction between pragmatic polysemy and syntactic polysemy, see Carston (2020).
[24] (Source, GRETIL)
[25] English translation of the verse by Krishnamoorthy.
"Bringing delight to the public by sucking
And showering down water (also, milk) at proper times
Scattering wide in every quarter in the forenoon
And receding back at the close of the day,
Those veritable ships that ferry one across
The ocean of rebirth's terror and suffering ,
May such rays (also, cows) of the blazing Sun
Bring us delight, holy and limitless". (Ānandavardhana 1974: 79).

(*dīptāṃśor gāvo*) are spread out in all directions (*viprakīrṇā diśi diśi*) during the daytime (*pūrvāhṇe*) and withdrawn (*saṃhāra-bhājaḥ*) by the close of the day (*viramaty ahni*). The sun's rays (*dīptāṃśor gāvo*) are the ships (*uttāra-nāvo*) for crossing the sea (*odanvad*) of a non-ending cycle of birth and rebirth, which is the source of our prolonged grief (*dīrgha-duḥkha-prabhava*). May the rays of the sun (*dīptāṃśor gāvo*) bring us (*utpādayantu*) unlimited bliss (*parama-parimitāṃ prītim*) to all kind-hearted people (*pāvanānāṃ*). Looking at the context, the meaning of *gāvo* as "rays" is the expressed meaning. However, *Gāvo* is a homonym, where one meaning being 'rays' and another meaning being 'a cow'. Accordingly, with the non-contextual meaning, it reads as the cow (*gāvo*) takes (*ākṛṣṭa*) water/milk (*payobhiḥ*) at the correct time (*samucita-samaya*) and gives happiness to its progeny (*prajānāṃ*) [calves] by releasing (*sṛṣṭaiḥ*) milk (*payobhiḥ*) at the proper time (*samucita-samaya*). The herd of cows is scattered in all directions (*viprakīrṇā diśi diśi*) during the daytime (*pūrvāhṇe*) [for grazing]. All the cows gather around (*saṃhāra-bhājaḥ*) [the cattle shed] by evening (*ahni viramaty*). Here, the primary word *gāvo* gives the contextual meaning of "sun rays". The suggested meaning of cow appears by the suggestive power of the word *gāvo.* Accordingly, the first two lines match perfectly with both meanings. In contrast, the literal meaning of *dīrgha-duḥkha* as "prolonged grief" will not fit with the suggested meaning of cow.

There will not be any change in the literal meaning if the poet has used any other synonym for sun rays instead of the word *gāvo*. In that case, the suggestion would not have arisen. Even if the poet has used any other synonym for rays, the literal meaning will be complete. It goes well with the contextual meaning also. Nevertheless, another synonym for *gāvo* (sun rays) will not give the meaning of cow. Hence, the figure of speech cannot be suggested. Therefore, in many cases, even

within the same language, the homonym that produces *SSMD* cannot be replaced with a synonym. The use of the homonym (*gāvo*) and the relation it shares with other words used in the verse is the primary source for suggestions here. The literal meaning is fixed with sun rays, and the meaning of cow is achieved through the suggestive function. A simile is suggested by comparing sun rays to the behaviour of cows.

As another example of linguistic clogging, the study analyses a verse with *SSMD* in the Malayalam language quoted in *Bhashabhooshanam* by Rajarajavarma.

> "*salkīrttikoṇṭu paramannakulattinellā-*
> *mulkkarṣadan prathitavikramanitrilōkyāṁ*
> *nalśāradōjvalavilāsavilōlaśīlan*
> *sanmānasattilamarunnitu rājahamsan*" (Rajarajavarma 2017: 171).

The literal meaning of the verse is, through esteemed reputation (*salkīrttikoṇṭu*), the king brings an end to the fame of the clan of enemy kings (*paramannakulam*). The king's valour and manliness (*vikramam*) are praised (*prathita*) in the three worlds. He is the one whose conduct shines forth due to the grace of muses. The literal meaning of the word *sanmānasam* is right-minded. "The king resides inside the minds of his virtuous subjects" is the contextual meaning. Alternatively, the word *sanmānasam* is also the spot where the swans (*rājahamsa*) arrive. In Hindu mythology, lake Manasarovar is seen as the abode of swans during the rainy season. Thus, the verse also suggests that, through esteemed reputation (*salkīrttikoṇṭu*), the Rājahamsa provides high excellence to the clan of splendid swans (*parama anna kulam*). They desire the welfare of others (*ulkkarṣadan*). The glory given by the swans to the Manasarovar is known in three worlds. During autumn (*śārada*), they are full of energy while playing, and they are the ones who gleefully wander amongst

the lotus of goddesses Sarasvati. The swans settle in *sanmānasam*. To remove the impression of impropriety through the non-contextual meaning, a similarity between the king and swan is suggested in this verse. Achuthanunni (2015) interprets the verse as, just like a swan in Manasarovar lake, the king stays in the minds of his subjects because of his good deeds. The aesthetic pleasure lies in the fact that the poet was able to give us the image of swans without mentioning it. Just like the glory given by the swans to the Mānasasaras, the king resides in the minds of virtuous subjects through his glory known to the three worlds. The suggestion of a figure of speech shows that the verse does not stop merely by presenting a non-contextual meaning of swans. The aesthetic beauty of the verse lies in resonating with the similarity between the swans and the king. In the translation of *SSMD,* if an equivalent homonym is not found in the target expression, then the literal and the suggested meanings have to be paraphrased, as in a literal translation. In such cases, the figure of speech can no longer be suggested. If the figure of speech is literally expressed in the translated expression, then the translated verse will be considered only as *śleṣa* and not *SSMD*[26].

Aesthetic Concerns of Translating *śabda-śakti-mūla dhvani*

In *SSMD*, the figure of speech, rather than being expressed directly through the denotative words, is being suggested. The author knits two seemingly unrelated objects [long season of summer and Lord Shiva in the passage quoted below] using the poetic threads of suggestion in *SSMD* verses. In the translation of *SSMD* verses, it becomes necessary to either individually express the suggested meaning through denotation or to expose the figure of speech directly through words, as in the case of *śleṣa*. Literal translation and paraphrasing of

[26] For more examples of *śleṣa and SSMD, see* Ānandavardhana (1974: 72-82).

expressions take away the possibility for suggestions in the translated verse. We often miss the poetic suggestion in a translated work because the suggested figure gets directly expressed or is omitted in the translated verse.

Three different translations of the Sanskrit passage, "*atrāntare kusuma-samaya-yugam upasaṃharann ajṛmbhata grīṣmābhidhānaḥ phulla-mallikā-dhavalāṭṭa-hāso mahā-kālaḥ*[27]" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 78) are taken to demonstrate the point mentioned above.

English translation of the passage by Krishnamoorthy. "In the meanwhile, appeared (also, yawned) the Terrible Time (also Lord Siva) of the name 'Summer' putting an end to the two flowering months (also, bringing an end of the aeons) and with radiant laughter in the farm of mansions festooned with blooming jasmines (also, with boisterous laughter white like full-blown jasmines)" (Ānandavardhana 1974: 79).

English translation of the passage by Ingalls, Masson, & Patwardhan.

> "Meanwhile the long period named Summer,
> **Meanwhile the God of Destruction,**
> when the market stalls are white with the laughter
> **whose terrible laughter is white**
> of their blossoming jasmine flowers,
> **as jasmine flowers,**
> expanded as it put an end to the two months of spring
> **yawned as He put an end to the aeons of time"**
> (Ānandavardhana 1990: 302).

Malayalam translation by C.V. Vasudeva Bhattathiri

> "*itiniṭayil raṇṭu vasantamāsakālaṁ upasaṁ harīcca keāṇṭu kēāṭṭuvāyiṭṭu.*

[27] (Source, GRETIL)

vēnalkkālamennu pēruḷḷa viṭarnna mullappūvākunna peāṭṭi ciriyēāṭe vanna mahākālaṁ (*śivan*)" (Ānandavardhana 2008:73).

In all three translations, the contextual and non-contextual meanings are directly denoted. The translator uses various methods to portray both of these meanings. The non-contextual meaning is given either in separate brackets or smaller font or italics to differentiate it from contextual meaning. When it is directly denoted through words in the translated verse, they become part of the literal meaning. The literal meaning of such verses is conveyed through literal translation, whereas, owing to the linguistic constraints triggered by *SSMD*, the suggested meaning is lost in translation. If the passage cannot suggest a non-contextual meaning after translation, then there is no scope for the reader to grasp the figure of speech in the translated passage.

The suggested meaning is non-contextual, and it requires the imaginative ability of the reader to identify the suggested meaning. The author/translator keeps it open for the reader's imagination to explore the suggested figure of speech without directly expressing it. The relation between the two seemingly unrelated objects is what the reader *recovers* in their imagination. Therefore, it opens the possibility for interpretation from the reader's frame of mind. An active engagement of the reader is necessary for this process of *recovering* the relation between the contextual meaning and the non-contextual meaning. The reader gets that aesthetic pleasure by actively engaging in the creative process along with the author.

In verses with *SSMD*, if a translator cannot employ equivalent expressions that can convey *both* the meanings encoded in the source expression, then translated verse misses the poetic suggestion. Consequently, readers cannot savour the suggested

meaning as it is absent in the translated verse. Suppose the suggested meaning/sound in a verse is translated through denotation instead of the contextual meaning. In that case, it does not form any relationship with the context and thus remains ambiguous. Thus, linguistic clogging arises at the suggested level in *SSMD* verses. *SSMD* verses can be translated at the literal level without any specific difficulty. If we look at the contextual meaning, the translated verse is meaningful and complete at the literal-half level. However, it cannot suggest the figure of speech in the translated verse. The lack of poetic suggestion in the target expression thus results in a half-baked translation.

Conclusion

The suggestive power of words, when actualised through the creative use of phonic elements and lexical drift to encode meaning, enhances the aesthetic attributes of an expression by alluding to a figure of speech. In the translation of such literary expressions with *SSMD*, we encounter linguistic clogging not in terms of primary meaning but due to the linguistic and aesthetic constraints in capturing the suggestive aspects. This study analysed literary expressions with *SSMD* where the literal and suggested meanings were entirely different and showed how linguistic clogging created linguistic and aesthetic constraints on the translations. Generally, when words with similar phonic elements cannot be brought out in translation, the target expression shortfalls poetic suggestion (*dhvani*). Nevertheless, when the translation succeeds in capturing the parameters of sound (*śabda*), that is, the structural elements of the source expressions, along with the meaning, reference, and other semantic features, then the lyrical beauty and aesthetic attributes of the verse can be maintained even in the translation of verses with a poetic suggestion. Once the explanatory link between the structural (phonic) elements of words and content,

that is, the causal connection between *SSMD* and lexical drift, and meaning is understood, it may be possible to put that for broader applications. In such a manner, understanding the importance of the phonic elements in human translation can be helpful in areas such as machine translation, where structural elements are registered and processed, capturing aspects of content.

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On Some Aspects of Translating Children's Literature in Contemporary India

UMESH KUMAR

Abstract

For the last two and a half decades, translation research has witnessed a boom. Beginning with the 'cultural turn' in the 1990s, translation research is now characterized by an informed cultural and political awareness supplemented by a host of deconstructionist methodologies. As a result, quite a sizeable quantity of insightful and controversial studies on translation is being published regularly. Riding on the back of conceptual advancements in the structure and function of language; aided by theoretical insights such as poststructuralist, feminist, and system theory approaches and so on, translation research today has created a niche for itself in (re)interpreting and (re)directing the prevailing value systems across disciplines. Following this trail, again from the early 1990s onwards, a few scholars began to create a specialized field of inquiry within translation research called translating children's literature. This article focuses on this evolving field. However, most of the research on translating children's literature is being undertaken in the west. Translation scholars in South Asia and more particularly in India have not paid the required attention to this growing field. The neglect is startling for the region continues to produce a significantly high quantity of children's books across different languages. Therefore, the primary aim of this article is to encourage research on translating children's literature in the Indian context. The article exemplifies and substantiates its call by providing a theoretical account of translating Marathi children's literature into Hindi. For its material and discussion, the article draws from Kisson Ki Duniya: Marathi Baal Kahaniyon Ka Pratinidhi Sankalan (2019) (The

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Landscape of Tales: Selections from Marathi Children's Stories), which this author has co-translated and edited.

Keywords: Children's Literature, Children's Literature in Translation, Translation Challenges and Strategies, Collaborative Translations.

Introduction

Translating children's literature and translating for children

Unlike South Asia, the last three decades in western academe have seen unprecedented growth in the amount of scholarly attention that is being paid to the practice of translating texts for children. However, Paul Hazard (1878-1944) –a French professor of comparative literature at Sorbonne, was one of the first to have mooted the idea of the international exchange of children's books in his 1932 groundbreaking book *Les Livres, Les Enfants, et Les Hommes* (Books, Children, and Men, 1972). Through *Les Livres* Hazard advances a (romantic) vision regarding the possibility of an international understanding as well as that of aesthetic appreciation through children's books. Similarly, Jella Lepman in her autobiographical narrative titled *A Bridge of Children's Books* (1964) proposed to counter the horrors of the Second World War by juxtaposing children's books as reconciliatory tools. It is not difficult to infer that both Hazard and Lepman carry idealistic notions about children's books which they wish to realize by providing them with an international reach.

A significant departure from this idealistic and international notion of children's books was initiated by a symposium entitled *Children's Books in Translation* (Klingberg, Orvig and Amor 1978) that paved the way for a nuanced understanding of translated children's books. In other words, scholars, here, proposed to discuss translated children's books as linguistic, ideological, and economic exercises, among others. Further,

during the same symposium, Richard Bamberger –an Austrian scholar, urged that serious attention should be given to the role of translation while negotiating children's literature. According to him, the role of translation had 'hardly been touched upon …in spite of the fact that translations, as a rule, are of even greater importance in children's literature than in adult literature' (1978:19).

Consequently, the subsequent work in the translation of children's literature began to pay serious attention to hitherto neglected domains. Gote Klingberg taps some of these in his book entitled *Children's Fiction in the Hands of the Translators* (1986) in which he pays attention to cultural context adaptation, the importance of read-aloud exercise and also that of visuals in children's books. Further, the appearance of two significant works in the early 2000s heralded a new turn for this growing field by exploring possible ways in which translation of children's books could be evaluated and critiqued. These two monographs are: *Translating for Children* (2000) by Riitta Oittinen and *Comparative Children's Literature* (2005) by Emer O' Sullivan. In their studies, O' Sullivan and Oittinen ask new questions regarding the history and poetics of the translation of children's books. At the same time, both these authors throw significant light on the author-translator dialogue while handling the translation of children's books. One of the significant aspects of both these studies is that they put emphasis on the implied child-reader in the translation of children's books.

Recent research in translation of children's literature discourse borrows liberally from scientific terminology, comparative literature, psychoanalysis, media and so on. Gillian Lathey's book *Translating Children's Literature* (2016), for example, addresses the adult-child duality as a major challenge in the translation of children's literature. However, the most

enterprising aspect of the current research in the translation of children's literature is its penetration into specific questions. For instance, Vanessa Leonardi in her monograph *Ideological Manipulation of Children's Literature Through Translation and Rewriting* (2020) lays bare the capital of 'manipulation' or, phrased more neutrally, 'intervention' inherent in the translation of children's literature. Another volume, edited by Anna Kerchy and Bjorn Sundmark entitled *Translating and Transmediating Children's Literature* (2020) addresses a host of conjunctures involved in adapting, translating, and transmediating children's literature. *Negotiating Translation and Transcreation of Children's Literature* (2020) edited by Joanna Dybiec-Gajer, Riitta Oittinen, and Małgorzata Kodura brings novel insights to the field by applying the concept of transcreation in translating for children and the young audience. The volume pinpoints a number of transcreative strategies used by translators while addressing issues like humour, dual address, nonsense, the interplay of words etc. in the translation of children's literature. A recent study by Marija Todorova entitled *The Translation of Violence in Children's Literature* (2022) discusses the role of violence in the translation of children's literature. Though Todorova advances her arguments with specific reference to the historical neglect of the Western Balkans in the imagination of the Global North, her study, nevertheless, is applicable to many other societies and cultures that have been similarly neglected.

The quick survey of research conducted in the translation of children's literature so far delineates a few important points for consideration. Firstly, research in the translation of children's literature is gaining acceptance and recognition within Translation studies. Secondly, as we can see in our later part of the discussion –it is now getting more nuanced and sophisticated. However, the majority of the research is being

conducted by scholars in the Global North and most of the texts/ authors/objects of studies belong to that region. A careful survey of literature informs us that there is a paucity of similar research in South Asia in general and India in particular. This is a serious gap in translation research which needs urgent attention.

However, the existing research in the field follows a unidirectional trail. In other words, its approach is that of '*translating children's literature*' and not '*translating for children*'. To the uninitiated, both these approaches might look similar but there is a difference. The former approach smacks of an inherent 'adultist agenda' whereas the latter has the intention to reach out to children and militate against the (sub) conscious adult authority. In fact, the Finnish scholar and translator Riitta Oittinen in most of her works and more particularly in *I am Me – I Am Other: On the Dialogics of Translation for Children* (1993) has argued that translators should 'translate for children'. Such an approach by Oittinen not only breaks with the pattern of traditional research but also provides a new turn. It is pertinent to mention here that in *Kisson Ki Duniya: Marathi Baal Kahaniyon Ka Pratinidhi Sankalan* (2019) (The Landscape of Tales: Selections from Marathi Children's Stories), we attempted to translate Marathi short stories *for* the (Hindi) children. Consequently, the translation project of *Kisson Ki Duniya* feels closer to Oittinen's proposal theoretically.

Oittinen, in the same book, foregrounding the theoretical advancements of the Tel Aviv group and Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of Dialogics, views the practice of translation as a dialogue. Likewise, according to her, translation is a continuous dialogue between the text and the translator's understanding of the text and of the target audience. Further, 'the concept of childhood underlying and

affecting Oittinen's study is the "wise and able" child who lives in a carnivalesque subculture, translators should dive into the children's carnival' (Metcalf 1995: 292). In other words, Oittinen creates an analogy between *carnivalism* and the translation process by claiming that every act of translation is a carnivalistic process and, likewise, the entire children's culture is carnivalistic in nature. Therefore, in Oittinen's schema, the task of a translator is not only to translate the different aspects of the target language and culture but also a parallel running culture – a child's culture (Oittinen 2006: 84-141). Another significant undercurrent in Oittinen's work is her unapologetic stance regarding the empowerment of (child) readers along with the empowerment of translators and illustrators (Metcalf 1995: 293). She proposes that the translator's subjectivity, 'humanity, personality and worldview should openly enter into the dialogic process of translation' (1995: 293). Taking on from this insight, it will be in the fitness of things to briefly chalk out the translator's subjective position with regards to *Kisson Ki Duniya* –our point of reference in the present article.

I – The Subjective Position of the Translator

In retrospect, I believe that my first lessons in translation began in the company of my mother. While still in the village, it was my responsibility from second grade onward to answer the Inland letters sent by my father –a serving soldier in the Indian army. Mother and I would sit down to discuss the general theme that the letter should address. Later, she would go silent and wait for me to convert the theme into full-grown sentences. In a way, it was my job to translate her thoughts into sentences. Usually, it would not end there. She would also demand a reading of what I have written, which would always be at the back pages of my school notebook first, before turning them finally on the Inland letters. She had an eye for detail, clarity, tone and the presentation of the message. Her

dissatisfaction would require me to revisit and revise my draft a number of times. Unknowingly, she has done a great favour to me. Her obsession with the nuances of language and its usage has taught me 'tentative' language habits –indispensable for translators, one would like to believe.

Later, we began accompanying my father from one state to the other or rather, from one language to the other. Within a span of every two or three years, I was being introduced to a new language. And mother would create the testing ground to check on the quality and quantity of my acquisition. For example, while in Vadodara she would ask me to speak Gujarati and read stories to her in that language. The exercise would demand that I first translate those sentences from the 'alien' (Gujarati) language and present it finally in a language that she would understand. Looking retrospectively, I call those attempts as examples of '*tatkal'* translations. The same exercise would be in force from the English language as well, besides readings from Hindi –comparatively easy to translate because of the syntactic similarities between Hindi and Haryanvi –my mother tongue. In a way, my mother took her three-language formula quite religiously! But the major faultline of this ever-alternating language acquaintance model was that I was never made to invest much time in a single language. My father's frequent transfers were a major hindrance. At the age of fourteen, I entered the Kendriya Vidyalayas. With this, my encounters with new languages stopped altogether. Hindi and English were the only two languages that I studied thereafter. However, whatever little familiarity I nurtured with different Indian languages went a long way in defining my language taste buds. It can also be inferred from the discussion that my acquaintance with Indian languages at that stage was only at the level of (textbooks) children's literature in that language.

Attending the University of Pune from 2005-2010 was a turning point in my life in many ways. The most important among these was the realisation of my fascination with a new language –Marathi in the current case. In a way, it was the re-discovery of my childhood exercise. Most of my friends there were native Marathi speakers. Listening to them familiarised me not only with the vocabulary, and sentence constructions but also with the often hidden 'secrets', the 'twists and turns' of Marathi. In my friends' company, I began to speak and became relatively confident in the next five years. The newly acquired spoken abilities gave me a lot of confidence to pursue some sort of career in Marathi language. To embark on it, I decided to learn Marathi officially now. Fortunately, around the same time, I started to work at Banaras Hindu University (BHU). I enrolled in BHU's Marathi Department to do a two-year part-time Diploma where I would meet my teacher and future translation collaborator Pramod Padwal. The line of study in the course was simple but quite effective. In four semesters, the learners would be required to cover the Marathi textbooks named *Baal Bharti* from the first to the eighth standard. It was rather a fair exposure that I got towards the institutional usage of the language during the diploma years. Needless to say, the verbal background covered already helped a great deal.

One day, during one of our routine discussions, I asked my Marathi language instructor about the compilation of Marathi language textbooks, especially the *Baal Bharti*. There it came out that quite a lot of material in these language textbooks is drawn from the state-funded children's magazine named *Kishor*. On further probing, I came to know that the magazine is in continuous monthly circulation for more than five decades, besides having special issues on Diwali. All the issues of the magazine are digitized and available for free on its website. With high circulation and good editorial quality to go,

the magazine has created a niche for itself in Marathi Children's literature and commands equal respect among adults. In a moment of epiphany, we decided to collaboratively select and translate a select bunch from *Kishor* to Hindi and put together an anthology.

Here, please, notice that the reasons behind this individualized account of the translator's subjectivity are much more than a self-reflection activity. The author is aware of the prevailing (read normative) stance where 'I' does not sit well with any attempt that seeks to engage in an objective piece of writing. This biasness with 'I' and its validity in translation practice needs to be handled more carefully. More so, since (literary) translation is a very subjective enterprise and the empirical objectivity of other disciplines might not exactly fit the bill here. However, the 'I' of the translator, in the case under discussion, is factored into the general exercise of translating children's literature. Thus, the subjective account of the translator is foregrounded with an assumption that it is one of the important metalinguistic and paratextual elements that influence the translation of children's literature. Through the socio-cultural baggage of the translator accounted above, it is not difficult to discern that his development during childhood also had a place for translation practice albeit through his mother's (adult) intervention. Speaking differently, subjective accounts of the translators can go a long way in determining their concept of childhood which is at work while they translate children's books. It is also their individual concept of childhood that 'will determine the translator's approach to translation and impact the final outcome' (Metcalf 1995: 293). However, before we launch into the discussion and impact of our final outcome, it is important to have a brief discussion regarding the urgent need for translating children's literature in India.

Why Translate Children's Literature across Indian Languages?

Barring the routine translations from English to other Indian languages, translation of children's literature across Indian languages is rather neglected. We were asked many a time – why translate children's literature among Indian languages? What is the need? To answer this question here, I wish to make the following submissions. Quite often we hear that the English language is determined and eager to cannibalize Indian languages. It is not unfamiliar to listen *angrezi hatao, bhartiya bhasha bachao* (remove English, save Indian languages). However sad, it is also true that such utterances remain mere slogans within the larger language politics of the country. For a moment, by refraining from accusing English, will it not be a thought exercise to see how much actual communication is happening among Indian languages themselves? I have noticed that my students of M.A. English literature generally remain oblivious about the literatures of their counterparts studying the same course in the departments of Indian languages. In the same way, for example, the students of M.A. Hindi are hardly aware of what is going on in Marathi, Bengali or Nepali literature and vice-versa. It still remains a mystery why comparative studies never took off massively in our context. At the same time, one should not discredit that however microscopic, some communication can still be seen among Indian languages primarily at the research level. But is it enough to keep in mind the sheer quality and quantity of languages that we have?

Through our translations in *Kisson ki Duniya* (Padwal and Kumar 2019: Translators' Note), we contend that the feasibility of dialogue among children's literature of different Indian languages will not only nurture children's literature in India but also Indian languages per se. There is a lot of

emphasis on language learning until a child remains in school. Unfortunately, these language textbooks suffer from a glaring deficit. For instance, a surface evaluation of a Hindi textbook will reveal that most of the material in it is drawn from the north Indian context. The textbook is a living embodiment of the writers and culture of north India. The same observation can be applied fairly and uniformly to the textbooks of all other Indian languages. Through such textbooks, our students get familiarity with the linguistic component of the language per se but they almost remain comparatively illiterate about the pluralistic character of our country in terms of her languages, cultures, and alternative ways of life. Because of this comparative illiteracy, there is a danger that our youth may develop cultural chauvinism. There is an urgent need that we revisit our language textbooks to make them more accommodative so that jingoistic sentiments about one's own region, language, culture and tradition are not nursed through them. The real self of our nation can only be realised in its heterogeneity. To cater for that self, proper pedagogical choices should be made keeping in mind the multicultural and multilingual needs of our nation. Consequently, the first step towards it would be to produce inclusive reading material for children. And translation, without doubt, could be the most potent tool for the creation of inclusive reading material. Jackie Kay, the well-known Scottish poet, once said that it takes more than one language to tell a story. Through translations in *Kisson ki Duniya*, a modest attempt is made to tell Marathi children's stories in one more language.

Having enough translated material though is not enough in itself. In spite of recommending a major push for the Indian languages in the New Education Policy (NEP, 2020), our preparations remain rather haphazard on the issue of mutual enrichment of Indian languages. For example, when NEP 2020 was put up for public debate and discussion, there was hardly

any mention of using translation as a potential bridge among Indian languages. It was disheartening to see NEP putting a lot of emphasis on children's education, especially early education, without turning a favourable eye towards Indian children's literature. Over the years, the missing case of children's literature and its translations constitutes a major lacuna in India's language debate. In other words, we are yet to deal with two questions: a) is there a place for children's literature –as a (major) stakeholder in India's language debate? b) Can translation be foregrounded as a pedagogical intervention in addressing India's linguistic complexity? While working on the Marathi material of *Kisson Ki Duniya*, we realized the huge potential that translation of Indian children's literature has for (Indian) translation scholars and theorists. The scholarship will not only bridge an existing gap within (Indian) translation studies but has the potential to go a long way in creating a possible industry of children's literature in translation. One could debate regarding what should be translated and what not. However, it is still in the fitness of things to propose that the cross-linguistic translation of language textbooks should be the first step in this direction. In fact, this translation exercise, it is proposed, should be considered a segment of knowledge text production.

What follows in the rest of the article is an account of major outcomes from our experience of translating children's literature into the Indian context. In other words, it is an attempt to put forth the descriptive case study of the translation of *Kisson ki Duniya* into Hindi and argue for generalizations that might replicate in similar translation attempts.

Discussion of Case Study

a) *The issues of copyright material*

The first task for us was to go through the potential material available for translation. Once twenty-five items were

shortlisted by us (for which we had our own methodology), the next task was to trace and address the copyright component of the select material. When we approached the office of the director, the Maharashtra state textbook development and curriculum revision committee, we were faced with an awkward situation. The office, after going through our request remained silent and did not reply at all. However, one of the translators of the project decided to approach the office in person. Off the record, it was revealed to us that the staff has looked into the rules and regulations that regulate the production of *Kishor* magazine with care and did not find anything related to the copyright. Likewise, it was not difficult to deduce that those who founded *Kishor* never thought that a day might come when somebody would endeavour to translate this Marathi material into any other language!

Nevertheless, we were verbally assured to go ahead with our translations. *Kishor* is a state-funded journal and has regularly paid the authors whose work has appeared in its pages –we were told. For a moment, one may think it to be an individual problem of the translators. But I am sure there could have been a number of translation projects that never really took off because of acopyright entanglements. Any contemporary publisher would be scared to touch a translated material in the absence of a copyright permission. As translator-editors, we were aware of this fact. Approaching the original authors was no solution either as they had already relinquished the right over their creations. They, in fact, were excited and wanted us to carry on with the project. It is after long perseverance and patience that we finally managed to receive copyright permission in writing.

The theorisation of translation practices has not given adequate attention to the issue of copyright elements in translation. The general preoccupation of translation scholars assumes

copyright to be a personal issue between the translator and the author or the translator and the publisher. Indeed, the usual capital exchanges involved in the process make it a personal issue between the two parties. As translators, my collaborator and I too held the similar view. However, the negotiations we had with the operators of *Kishor* for copyright permission changed our perspective. Here was a state-run journal – subsidised entirely on public money, having no (overt) intentions of making a profit. During our private conversations, the Marathi authors agreed to our project of translation instantly. For them, the 'honour' of being printed in a different language was much more rewarding than usual capital gains. However, their verbal agreement and moral support to our work was in no way a substitute for the issue of copyright. In exchange for the money received from Kishor, these authors had already surrendered their rights over their works. It was beyond their good intentions now to solve our problem.

Here, one was witnessing a peculiar hurdle for translation –not from the author or the (money-spinning) publisher but from the steel-framed bureaucracy. If we have to create a translation of children's literature as an industry, the copyright hurdle needs to be addressed first. It is not a hidden fact that the school curriculum in India is still in the hands of the state. Both the centre and the states control it in their respective domains. The state machinery owns the copyright of the language textbooks in almost all cases. In such a scenario, instead of keeping a tight-lid copyright restriction on the language textbooks, the state would do well by following the 'copy left' stance on the language textbooks. It would encourage potential translators to undertake the exercise of translation freely without the overwhelming fear of copyright violations. In fact, it is in the interest of the general public to declare school textbooks as one of the constituents of the public domain. The translations

so undertaken should be called as exercises in 'knowledge texts' production and should generally be advertised as contributions to the manufacturing of knowledge society.

b) *The collaborative translation exercise*

The new proposals in translation theory are seeking an increased share of collaborative work among translators, especially in the context of south-Asian languages (Kamal 2019; Ramaswamy 2022). The basic premise that governs such an understanding is the greater 'inherent cultural similarities' among the south-Asian languages. In the Indian context too, languages display linguistic divide –say for instance between the Indo-Aryan and the Dravidian ones. However, they depict similar cultural milieus, if not identical, through their usage. At the same time, the interaction between the languages of the same family may also provide interesting results. The language pair –Marathi and Hindi –in our case belongs to the Indo-Aryan family. We could infer that the cultural and linguistic transfer between the two languages was comparatively 'easy'. It is likely that the usage of the identical script (Devanagari) bridges the linguistic distance between Marathi and Hindi. In addition, the cultural and physical distance between Marathi and Hindi regions has always been positively negotiable. Having these common linkages as background, one is better placed to engage in a direct translation between the two languages.

But still there is a lingering problem. It is a common knowledge that for any meaningful translation to happen, the translator(s) need to be fairly competent at least in two languages. However, one submits humbly that in the contemporary scenario, such competence is not that common. The world around us is increasingly becoming monolingual where equal working competence in two languages is becoming rare. Equal working competence should not be

confused with familiarity. One can be equally familiar with more than one language –and people are –but the point, however, is, whether they can translate that familiarity into competence. I intend to submit a random thought experiment that I conducted.

Banaras Hindu University has the facility to teach almost all the modern Indian languages. However, a random web page survey of the respective departments provides a sorry picture when it comes to the translation output. Surprisingly, many teachers list translation/translation studies as their specialisations. During personal interactions, one could notice that there was no dearth of intent in them as far as commitment to translation exercise is concerned. They are highly competent in their chosen language and adequately familiar with one or more languages. For instance, a teacher teaching in the Marathi department is found to be highly competent in Marathi besides high familiarity with Hindi and English at the same time. But her Marathi competence does not match equally with the other two languages and hence a major hindrance, in an attempt of potential translation at the individual level.

It will not be wrong to infer that situations like these cast a shadow on India's multilingual ethos. Speaking on this in an interview with the present author (Kumar 2020: 201-210), noted Odia short-story writer Dipti Ranjan Pattanaik connects multilingual proficiency with society's material and utilitarian needs. According to him, today, most teachers/scholars are trained in such a way that they are extremely competent in one language and not much in the second. People in the past learnt multiple languages with equal proficiency because it was their need. Pattanaik maintains that with the kind of social engagements that we make today, we can live 'meaningfully' with one language only. However, for the sake of creating meaningful intellectual capital we need more and more

scholars who are conversant in one global language and at the same time deeply rooted in the culture and literature of their own language(s).

Perhaps this is one of the reasons why we should advocate collaborative translation practices as one of the mechanisms to address this dearth of multilingual competence. Through this method, two translators collaborate in such a way that one is competent in the source language (the language *from* which translation is done) and other has strong hold over the target language (the language *to* which translation is done). While engaged in such collaborative practice, one could theorise the modus operandi as well as the sociology of collaborative translation instead of assuming it to be an innocent and benevolent act. In other words, there is a need to understand these collaborations from the perspective of the material as well as the agents of translation –the translators. However, such an exercise, I submit, could be a topic of separate discussion.

c) *The practical part*

Before we began the translations, my collaborator and I had no idea regarding the approach we were to adopt in undertaking the task. In a moment of spontaneity, we sat down having our individual photocopies of the Marathi version (source text). We read the text together –a number of times. My collaborator led these readings as he had a superior hand in handling the source text. The effort was not only to familiarize ourselves with the narrative but also to experience the twists and turns of the language, authorial intentions and usage of vocabulary –for these were stories primarily written for children. After that, before every translation, our first exercise invariably constituted of reading the Marathi source text together. As soon as the reading of a particular sentence used to get over, my immediate job was to translate the sentence into Hindi –the

target language. However, the transition from the source text to the target was not devoid of conflicts and problems. Let me share a few examples.

During one of the book discussion events of *Kisson Ki Duniya*, a couple of attendees asked if we ever disagreed with each other's position, choice or method while translating collaboratively. It is difficult to provide a direct 'yes/no' to such a query. However, there were many moments of conflict that I can recall. Sometimes, a single word or sentence would not transfer that easily in translation. We realised that the 'failure' was occurring broadly at three levels: linguistic, cultural and at the translators' level. The first two reasons are fairly recognized in the field of translation studies, but the failure of the translator(s) has not got much attention. Consequently, one might ask if the so-called 'failure of the translator(s)' is independent of linguistic and cultural failures in translation.

For the moment, I mention a couple of words, among many, that emerged in Marathi during our translation exercise and critically foregrounded our roles as translators. These two words were *gubgubit* and *faataa*. The first word was used for Vaibhav –the child protagonist of the short story titled *Chhota Recharge* (Small Recharge) (Padwal and Kumar 2019: 17-21) –in order to describe the physical dimensions as well as some hard-to-miss traits of his personality. My immediate response to the word in Hindi was *gol-matol*. The choice did not satisfy my collaborator. Though he expressed his inability to give me an alternative but nevertheless refused to accept my version. We had marathon discussions to find a suitable alternative in Hindi that can preserve the sense and 'joy' it conveys in Marathi. We were aware about the cultural connotations of the said word in Marathi. Apart from signalling a plump face, the word also implies a 'fairer' skin complexion. Whereas in the

word *gol-matol* the sense of rounded facial structure was much more predominant and the complexion part was missing altogether. Eventually, by roping in a word called *gulgula gora-chitta* we could hope to cover it 'all'. The association of the word *gulgula* with food was an added advantage (for there is a food named *gulgule/a* in north-India –the Hindi speaking region). Needless to say, the word also highlighted the interconnection between the plump face and food.

In another story titled *Aaba ki Kahani* (Aaba's Story) (Padwal and Kumar 2019: 31-35), the Marathi word *faataa* underwent a similar deliberation. In the events of the story, the narrative was referring to an intersection –leading the way to different villages. An intersection of this kind is called *faataa* in Marathi. Initially, the onomatopoeic resonance of the word *faataa* with the Hindi word *faatak* (gate?) seemed quite a tempting option till my collaborator intervened regarding the word's one-dimensional character. In other words, *faatak* revealed just the stoppage segment (gate) of *faataa* and not the corresponding ways that emerge from it. Eventually, we had to use the Hindi word *tiraha* (leading to three different ways) in order to accommodate the essence of the narrative discussion. It wasn't the most apt word for *faataa* but somewhat compensatory under the circumstances. Meanwhile, with my limited research, I could discover that there was no word for *tiraha* in Marathi.

The two instances discussed so far testify to our inclination towards adopting a TT-oriented translation strategy. However, there were occasions when we adopted the ST-oriented translation strategy. The anthology is, to a great extent, full translations of the source texts derived from *Kishore* magazine with no additions, omissions, or footnotes. In fact, retrospectively, we realise that we made conscious and unconscious efforts in 'safeguarding' the ST at every possible

juncture. Theoretically speaking, scholars too identify two main trends in the practice of (children's) translation: source-oriented translation and target-oriented translation. 'The first approach advocates the preservation of the source language and cultural characteristics (being faithful to the form and meaning) whereas the latter favours the "merging" of the source text into the target language culture, bringing it closer to the readership' (Alla 2015: 16). However, the safeguarding approach that we adopted should be understood in the larger socio-pedagogical context in which I have located our translation exercise in the beginning of my discussion. Nevertheless, it also needs to be mentioned that while safeguarding the interest of the source language and culture, we intended to produce acceptable translation rather than adequate translation. By 'acceptable' translation, I mean acceptable to the child reader whereas 'adequate' could be a term that is more suited to adult readers. In other words, the translators' intention has been to reach out to children rather than impressing the adults even while adopting a source-oriented translation. Let me cite some examples to build on this perspective further.

One of the crucial features of the source text, like in most of the children's literature anyway, is related to the names of the characters and the nomenclature of relations. Usually, the names of the characters are not changed in literature translated for adult readers. While discussing the problematic of names in the translation of children's literature, Gillian Lathey notes, 'translators writing for children often adapt them, for example by using equivalents in the target language such as Hans/John/Jean, William/Guillermo/Guillaume, Alice/Alicia' (Lathey 2016: 44). But negotiating with names in children's literature could be a contentious issue. Names are powerful markers of varied social and cultural contexts. If the translator doesn't translate or improvise on names, the younger readers

will have a continuous reminder that they are reading an unfamiliar text; a text that is situated in a different location. On the other hand, if the translator provides equivalent/new names, the young readers might experience a mismatch between names and the setting/plot of the text. Anthea Bell addresses this conundrum:

The idea behind all this is to avoid putting young readers off by presenting them with an impenetrable-looking set of foreign names the moment they open a book.

It's the kind of problem that constantly besets a translator of children's literature (Bell 1985:7).

However, in *Kisson Ki Duniya*, we have retained the source names in the translation. In Marathi cultural context, the name proper of an individual includes three components, almost without exception. The first component is the name of the individual followed by his/her father's name and finally ending with the surname. In formal situations, say for instance –school certificates or recruitments etc. the surname is written first, followed by the name of the individual and thereafter his/her father's name. As a matter of fact, in most of the Marathi language forms, there is no separate column for the father's name unlike in the Hindi-speaking regions of north India. In our translations, we made no effort to shorten the names of the characters/writers in order to acclimatise them according to the Hindi language norms. As a matter of fact, the Hindi language carries only the name of the individual accompanied by his/her surname –in official/unofficial setups both. In other words, Yadunath Dattatray Thatte is mentioned as it is from ST without becoming Yadunath Thatte in the Hindi version. Likewise, while handling the nomenclature of relations, we deliberately did not change them in the Hindi version. So the Marathi words Aai (mother), Baba (father), Kaka (uncle) etc. have been retained in Hindi without explanation. The context

of the narratives was so self-explanatory that such an explanation was not needed. In other words, we made a conscious choice against domestication at this juncture.

However, it is important to submit that while translating children's literature, domestication and foreignization carry much more complicated and complex choices. Most children do not master all foreign (Indian) languages. In such a scenario, translation is the only medium through which they form (any) genuine contact with foreign languages, cultures and customs. Further, a trend has started in translation practice, more particularly from the 1980s that increasingly questions the 'domesticating' tendency. Today, translators also display a tendency to retain a certain degree of 'foreignness' in their translations. In fact, in his book *Children's Fiction in the Hands of the Translators* (1986), Gote Klingberg is highly critical of the source-oriented method and calls it a rather common way to translate children's books. According to him, the translated children's book should enhance the (child) reader's range of foreign culture, language and customs.

Another significant challenge that we faced was that of ambivalence. A few stories were addressing dual readership – child and adult reader both. For instance, the story *Gachak Andharee* (Padwal and Kumar 2019: 22-26) is an apt example of ambivalence and duality. The duality of the text was a major challenge in the translation of this story. In order to keep multiple levels of the text, we decided not to 'over-translate' any of the source text elements. In other words, we were careful about the possible semantic surplus/deficiency in translation. For starters, the name *Gachak Andharee* has no meaning in the story. It is an empty signifier invented by adult Sada to scare and control his child Gajanan. As we read on, *Gachak Andharee* comes 'alive' to unsettle Gajanan but eventually ends up haunting Sada –its inventor. The story

undertakes a fluctuating crossover from the world of children to that of adults. The story lays bare the vulnerability of adults in a world they presume to lord over. In fact, the relationship between children's and adult literature at times could be very fluid and there is an absolute potential for 'crossover'. Consequently, scholars have questioned the feasibility of children's literature. According to Jack Zipes, "There has never been a literature conceived for children, a literature that belongs to children, and there never will be" (Zipes 2001: 40). In the same vein, Riitta Oittinen too seems unsure about the possibility of defining children's literature because literary works have a dormant potential to be redefined multiple times. Literature written for adults today might be tomorrow's children's literature (Oittinen 1993: 42-43). Indeed, the same holds true for some of the international bestsellers for children that were not written for children in the first place. *Panchtantra*, *Arabian Nights*, *Aesop's Fables,* Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels,* The work of Lewis Carroll etc. are a few clichéd examples that have migrated from the adult world to that of children.

Any discussion around children's literature and its translation will be incomplete without discussing the pedagogical and didactic elements surrounding it. Puurtinen has pointed out in his research that adults anticipate children's literature to aid the linguistic acquisition of the child reader. Therefore, the tendency of authors and translators of children's books toward normalization and standardization of grammar and language cannot be ruled out (Puurtinen, 1998). Closely aligned with pedagogical and didactic elements is the 'risk' of ideological manipulation. Vanessa Leonardi has already demonstrated that children and young adult literature is subjected to cultural and ideological changes (Leonardi, 2020). In *Subversive Innocence* (2002) Pattanaik too had argued earlier that "children's literature cannot be ideologically neutral. For all children's

texts assume a particular view of childhood forged by the culture to which they belong. Either way, in ratifying or negating the dominant cultural values, texts for children acquire a particular agenda" (Pattanaik, 2002: 2). Indeed, in *Kisson Ki Duniya* there are stories such as *Padosi Dharm* (Help thy Neighbor) (Padwal and Kumar 2019: 59-61), *Mehnat Ka Mantra* (The Mantra of Hard Work) (2019: 62-64), *Salaam Namaste* (2019:47-51) that can be classified as didactic but as we could note during our selection, they promote childhood values more than they promote adult didacticism. Pattanaik draws our attention to a trend in the west where "critics in the recent times have often embarked upon the task of building a canon of children's literature by banishing the texts that seem to be *overly* didactic, and of promoting those texts which glorify the values that define childhood" (Pattanaik 2002:2, Italics mine). The crucial question at this juncture, however, is how one will make a distinction between didactic and *overly didactic* children's texts? Further, can there be a text not at all didactic? Pattanaik argues that some form of (adult) persuasion or didacticism, "is inherent in all literature including literature for children" (Pattanaik, 2002:3). However, it needs to be accepted here that in *Kisson Ki Duniya* there were some ideological considerations at work. I would restrain from calling it ideological manipulation and will be comfortable with what Leonardi would call ideological 'intervention'. Let us elaborate on this point a bit further.

Kisson Ki Duniya has individual chapters on B. R. Ambedkar (Padwal and Kumar 2019: 72-73); Mahatma Jotirao Phule (2019:74-75); Savitribai Phule (2019:76-77); Sant Gadge Baba (2019: 78-80) and Rajarshi Shahu Maharaj (2019: 81-83). Even a cursory (historical) glance at the books produced for children in India will intimate that the thinkers and social activists just mentioned have always been neglected. However,

that neglect has not been exclusive to children's literature alone. As translators, we decided to intervene and ensure that the young readers are acquainted with the life stories of these modern thinkers. Consequently, during selection, we ensured that the child reader is not bombarded with the thinkers' high-end philosophy or complex thought processes. On the contrary, we have selected those instances of their lives that the child-reader can easily visualize and relate too.

Open-ended Conclusions

The article has taken a stock of scholarship available on translating children's literature, more particularly in the western academe. Even in the west, it had been in an embryonic stage till recently. However, in the last two decades, theorists have made rapid strides and are now penetrating into multiple specifics of translating for children. Having looked at the proposal of translating *for* children, the article foregrounded the subjectivity of the translator and his concept of childhood as an important consideration in translating for children. The article has also highlighted the paucity of translation exercises amongst Indian languages with a specific focus on Indian children's literature.

To recapitulate, the primary intention of this article has been to provide an introductory view on translating Indian children's literature and the peculiar challenges the potential translators might encounter. Even though an attempt has been made to theorise and address the most common issues in translating children's literature into the Indian context, I am mindful that a plethora of issues still remain to be addressed. It is hoped that translation scholars will address all such issues in the future.

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Transcreating the Bard: A Case Study of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* in Hindi Celluloid

GLENIS MARIA MENDONÇA

Abstract

William Shakespeare's drama has been the staple for many Indian filmmakers who have 'transcreated' his plays to suit the Indian regional context and still managed to retain the plot frame, essence and themes of this brilliant Bard. This article will begin with understanding and defining the term 'transcreation', a popular term used in inter-semiotic translation studies and then argue to show how the varied adaptations of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet in Hindi celluloid are not mere adaptions but rather transcreations by creative minds. The article will offer a case study of a few transcreations of William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet in Hindi cinema. Bobby (1973), Ek Duuje Ke Liye (1981), Sanam Teri Kasam (1982), Qayamat se Qayamat Tak (1988), Saudagar (1991), Ishaqzaade (2010), and the most recent Sanjay Leela Bansali's Goliyon Ki Rasleela' Ram-Leela (2013). These films will be re-looked from the lens of 'transcreation' to assess their adaptability to the Indian region-specific milieu. These Hindi films made over the last five decades will be seen as creative renditions which harmoniously blend music, characters, tragic elements, camera techniques, local metaphors, and rustic locales and culturally amalgamate these myriad elements while still managing to balance the essence of Shakespeare's source play to appeal to the target audience. The paper will present a literature review of various articles previously published on the topic. It will further discuss how the play allows itself to be transcreated in the regional target space it occupies. The transition from stage to screen will be critiqued to see if justice has been done to the original text. The paper will appreciate

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the efforts and creativity of filmmakers who 'transcreate' to make the sixteenth-century tragedy of 'star-crossed lovers', relevant and loved by Hindi film audiences, from the seventies till present times.

Keywords: Transcreation, Shakespeare, Hindi Cinema, Renditions.

William Shakespeare's plays have positioned themselves as sounding boards for the global players of celluloid. By far, the sixteenth-century Bard's literary oeuvre has ignited interest among filmmakers, playwrights, Youtubers and other artists, particularly in this digital age. William Shakespeare's plays continue to provide fodder and inspiration to several writers and creative artists due to their timeless themes ranging from love, jealousy, ambition, greed and hate among others. When Shakespeare's writing (1564-1616) is adapted into celluloid, it becomes a rave and transports the audience to a cinematic utopia (Mohsin and Taskeen 308). Mindful of this global cinematization with regional re-location, Shakespeare and his plays veritably turn to be focal inspirational lighthouses. Among the tragedies, he wrote till 1608, *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*, are the most popular and awe-inspiring to artists and filmmakers alike. His tragicomedies or romantic comedies are equally captivating and have been rendered into celluloid to educate and entertain the audience of contemporary times.

This article will look at *Romeo and Juliet*, one of the splendid tragedies written by the Bard to fathom how several Hindi filmmakers in India have rendered it to tickle the taste buds of the film-hungry Hindi audiences in the last few decades. The argument drawn here will be to see how it is not a mere adaptation of Shakespeare's play that is done by filmmakers, but creative handling through an inter-semiotic translation, better known as 'transcreation'.

Understanding Transcreation

The term 'transcreation' is coined by combining two ideas, 'translation' and 'creation'. It was Purushottam Lal who in his work *Transcreation: Two Essays* (1972) used the term in an academic context and explicated it through his extensive writings. It was only after this, that the *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* sanctified its usage in its fifth edition in 1996.

In Roman Jacobson's triadic division of translation in *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation* (1959), he articulates three ways of interpreting verbal signs: "it may be translated into other signs of the same language (intralingual translation), into another language (interlingual translation), or into another, a nonverbal system of signs (inter-semiotic translation)" (231). Transcreation is another word for an inter-semiotic translation i.e., a translation from one set of signs into another. It is the creative inter-/intra-lingual re-interpretation of texts in order to suit the characteristics of an intended audience (Benetello 29). For instance, from a play in English to a film in Hindi. It adapts and renders a text from one language and cultural context into another in such a complete and wholesome manner that the audience finds it extremely delectable and appealing in the target culture and language. This creative process manages to balance the various elements like style, tone, images and emotions from the source text while rendering it into the target text. Moreover, special attention is laid on blending and salvaging the cultural characteristics of the target audience.

The best example is the transcreation of Shakespearean plays as Hindi films which are rendered very skilfully keeping in mind the sensitive Indian Hindi film audience. Vishal Bharadwaj's trilogy of *Maqbool* (2003) *Omkara* (2006) and *Haider* (2014) are outstanding transcreations which render the

three tragedies of Shakespeare viz. *Macbeth, Othello and Hamlet* in a creative manner to fuse Indian culture, characters, language, music, milieu and ethos to make it favourable and enjoyable to the Indian film audience and suit its cultural context.

Defining Transcreation

There are several definitions of the term transcreation and it is pertinent that we use a theoretical frame to assist the present research article to enable a pertinent definition of translation. Millon and Olvera-Lobo's "Towards a Definition of Transcreation: A Systematic Literature Review" looks at defining the term transcreation from three perspectives: literary translation, communication and advertising.

As an enterprise of literary translation, transcreation can is used to make sure that the target text is the same as the source text in every aspect: the message it conveys, style, the images and emotions it evokes and its cultural background. One definition says that transcreation is taking a text in one language and recreating it in another. Yet another definition is: "Transcreation is an intra-/interlingual re-interpretation of the original work suited to the readers/audience of the target language which requires the translator to come up with new conceptual, linguistic and cultural constructs to make up for the lack of, or inadequacy of existing ones." This gives more importance to cultural relevance and fitness of purpose (Million and Lobo 11).

In the realm of communication, transcreation is seen "as the process of planning and delivering interventions to reduce health disparities so that they resonate with the targeted community while achieving intended health outcomes" (ibid.). In the context of marketing and advertising, transcreation is usually concerned "with the adaptation of advertising material

into several different languages or for different markets." (ibid.).

Thus, we see that the term transcreation is multi-pronged and has several contextual references. This article will be using the translation and adaptation linked definition of the term transcreation in order to make it relevant and meaningful.

Literature Review

A review of literature is undertaken at two levels:

> Firstly, to get a strong base for the understanding of the theoretic frame of 'transcreation'. Secondly, to survey the previous works that have been written on adaptations of William Shakespeare in Hindi celluloid. Only the relevant writings are used to substantiate the idea of 'transcreation' as a form of creative adaption as manifested in the films under study.

The most profound understanding of 'transcreation' is provided by Sujit Mukherjee in his essay "Transcreating Translation: An Indian Mode". This is an address presented to the Asian literature in Translation Conference at Birmingham in May 1997. The first part of this essay discusses the term 'transcreation' as averred by P. Lal. In the latter half, Mukherjee stresses the translation of Indian languages into English. The former part of the essay is significant as Mukherjee quotes P. Lal saying how literal translation is easy, but what is challenging is the transportation of ethos, context and culture from one textual form into another. He illustrates this by showing the process of translating Sanskrit plays into other languages and art forms. When the translator departs from the literal manner of translation and employs creative strategies to make it naturalized in the target text in another culture, context and system of signs, transcreation ensues. Mukherjee agrees with Pal who states that translators often

consciously or unconsciously render their version to suit the social and moral climate of the age and times they live in. By doing so they bring in their own creative outpourings. This is the fundamental crux of the process of transcreation, wherein lies the creativity of the transcreator (Mukherjee 87).

Mukherjee's essay lays a strong foundation for the understanding of transcreation in the late nineties. He showed how the need for transcreation was necessitated particularly for the translation of languages like Sanskrit and Persian. The target audience prefers contemporariness. That was the reason why transcreations, and not literal translations were mandated.

In *Translation or Transcreation?* (2018), Spinzi-Rizzo and Zummo make a coherent attempt to demarcate the difference between the two terms in discourses, texts and visuals. The first essay "Translatere or Transcreare: In Theory and in Practice, and by Whom?" by David Katan, explores the evolution of "turns" in the discipline of translation studies and claims for a "transcreational turn" focussing on the need to understand the extent of mediation in translation and to value rather than criticize change through mediation and adaptation. In fact, this entire edited volume is a rich resource to assert a need to relook at lingua-cultural transfer in order to recognise the presence of creativity in every gesture of translation, as well as the agency of translation in every creative act. In another essay "Translation at the crossroads: Time for the transcreational turn?" published in *Perspectives* (2016), Katan highlights the significance of 'creativity' in the process of translational activity.

The book *Translation and Adaptation in Theatre and Film*, edited by Katja Krebs, provides an interesting understanding of transcreation, with particular reference to the adaptation of theatre to films. Krebs claims that contemporary adaptation studies have gone 'beyond discussions of faithfulness and

fidelity (3). Western discourse views adaptation as a 'transcreation'--- a creative re-rendering of a text from one cultural context to another. This is opposed to translation which focuses on sameness and fidelity to the source text. This book with three sections and ten essays offers a comprehensive understanding of the rich synergies between translation and adaptation studies. It explores the complexities of adaptation as a creative translational enterprise in a global culture where the local needs to be re-routed and re-rooted too. As its synopsis ascertains… "By exploring and investigating interdisciplinary and cross-cultural perspectives and approaches, this volume investigates the impact such occurrences of rewriting have on the constructions and experiences of cultures while at the same time developing a rigorous methodological framework which will form the basis of future scholarship on performance and film, translation and adaptation" (back page).

Mar Diaz-Millon and Maria Dolores Olvera-Lobo's "Towards a Definition of Transcreation: A Systematic Literature Review" is an eclectic deliberation on the understanding of modern-day transcreations. Eschewing the conventional idea of 'transcreation', this article refers to several critical perspectives on the topic to deepen our understanding of the term. The authors focus on three elements of transcreation viz. linguistic translation, cultural adaptation and creative re-interpretation. The authors here are not looking at transcreation only from the perspective of translation of content from one cultural context into another. Besides literature, they also explore other domains such as marketing, advertising, websites, and mobile applications among others. Thus, transcreation seen from a pragmatic lens gathers a broader momentum to make its application and reach much beyond the realm of literary texts to give it a catholic and global reach.

Numerous research articles on Shakespearean adaptations in Hindi celluloid are endemic via print and online sources. Among the most relevant ones is Mukesh Yadav's "Domesticating Shakespeare: A Study of Indian Adaptations of Shakespeare in Popular Culture", which engages with the idea of culturally amalgamating and domesticating the European model of Shakespeare onto the Hindi silver screen. By building a cultural and cinematic bridge, the author ascertains the role played by filmmakers like Vishal Bharadwaj (known for the famed Shakespearean trilogy in Bollywood) in bringing the Bard to a culturally familiar Indian space. The idea of 'domestication' is quite akin to the term transcreation. It negotiates the blurring of cultural boundaries in the process of adapting the Shakespearean play into Hindi celluloid. These adaptations are near-to transcreations as they merely use the Bard's plays as inspiration and render them as culturally close to the target audience as possible.

Sayed W. Mohsin and Shaista Takseen in their article "Cinematizing Shakespeare: A Study of Shakespearean Presence in Indian Cinema", look at the impact of 'glocal-cinematization' of Shakespearean plays on Indian cinema. They discuss how cinematic techniques have indigenized Shakespeare to make it enjoyable to the Indian audience. This phenomenon needs to be studied with an optimistic perspective; they assert. Likewise, Asma Qureshi's article, "A Study of Shakespearean Contribution to Indian Cinema", re-looks at the Bard's influence on Hindi celluloid and the creative adaptations of several Shakespearean plays. An interesting perspective is discussed in Mark Thornton Burnett's article "Shakespeare and Keraliyatha: *Romeo and Juliet*, Adaptation, and South Indian Cinemas", where the author shows how the regional South Indian cinema regionalises Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* to retain the

Keraliyatha or Kerala-ness (the flavours of Malayalam culture) and make it enjoyable to the target audience.

Thus, the literature review is undertaken to provide broad and scholarly perspectives on the topic under study.

Transcreating Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* into Hindi Celluloid: A Discussion

While foregrounding the definition of transcreation of Million-Lobo as a re-interpretation of the original work suited to the readers/audience of the target language while negotiating and balancing the source and target cultures, this discussion will present a case study of *Romeo and Juliet* and the various creative ways it is rendered by Hindi filmmakers in the last few decades. Do the Indian filmmakers do justice to rendering the Bard's play on the Hindi silver screen? Does the audience find it culturally at-home and relevant in terms of values, locales, songs, music and cast? How do Hindi film-makers domesticate this Shakespearean classic to make it relevant to the audience?

Interestingly, *Bobby* (1973) gives a brilliant twist to the Bard's *Romeo and Juliet* by presenting the plot of 'the star-crossed lovers' from the Italian context, as the conflict between the rich and the poor. In this film starring Rishi Kapoor (Raj) the rich businessman's son and the debutante Dimple Kapadia (Bobby Braganza, a poor fisherman's daughter), are pitted against the backdrop of cultural and economic disparities. Montagues and Capulets are given a new twist in this Nath versus Braganza romance which is interspersed with music, song, passionate dialogue delivery and sprawling locales ranging from Kashmir to Goa. It is interesting to note how the lady from a Roman Catholic background, Bobby Braganza is represented as the heroine who struggles with her impoverished background and bravely manages to salvage her dignity as a woman, despite odds. A rich Hindu businessman's

son and a poor Catholic fisherman's daughter reach the brink of suicide and jump off a waterfall. The creative tweak is its end which is far from tragic. They are saved with timely intervention to make the end appealing to Hindi cinema lovers. Herein comes the element of re-interpretation, quintessential of a transcreation, giving a twist at the end to make a cultural compromise with the target audience. However, the couple in *Ek Duje Ke Liye* (1981), meet a fateful end which holds similitude to the tragic end of *Romeo and Juliet*. Here, the filmmaker has not dabbled with the frame of the Bard's plotline. Vasu and Sapna are made for each other (the literal meaning of *Ek Duje Ke Liye*) and mad for each other too. The creative re-enactment of Indian cultures comes to play as the film brings together a "Romeo-like" South Indian man and a North Indian "Julliet-like" beauty while taking the audience on an engrossing roller coaster with subplots interspersed with brilliant songs, musical interludes, dialogues and cultural nuances. The parents of the couple create conflicts to make sure the couple never unite. This cross-cultural romance across the two states of India which meets a tragic fate was not appreciated by the Indian audience of its times. Disgusted by the societal pressures to their romance, Vasu and Sapna decide to commit suicide. So unlike *Bobby*, this film held on to the tragic fate of the lovers which leads to their fateful end. The antagonism of Montagues and Capulets is presented as the cross-cultural tension between North and South Indian values and cultural exclusions which Vasu and Sapna find irreconcilable. They find suicide the best option. But this did not go well with the Indian audience who expected a joyous 'all's well that ends well' and the happy union of lovers. The filmmaker here has transcreated the source text with fidelity and carefully rendered it in Hindi celluloid to make it at-home in the target culture.

Battling complex tribulations, *Sanam Teri Kasam* (1982) negotiates an entire process of transcreating a Shakespearean classic with a garnish of Indian ethos to craft a narrative of sixteenth-century English theatre to suit and appeal to the Hindi film audience who enjoy happy endings. The 'star-crossed lovers' here battle adventures and misadventures in Indian locales ranging from Mumbai to Shimla. There is a complex reworking of the original plotline to suit the target culture and audience. Interspersed with Hindi songs, dance sequences and the cliched finding of a long-lost son, made this Shakespearean rendition a blockbuster to the audience. Like *Bobby*, the happy ending is a creative tweak to the source text, making a pleasant end to a tragic play which inspired this creation.

The Montagues and Capulets are the two feuding clans, which are re-rendered as the Singhs and Rajputs in *Qayamat Se Qayamat Tak* (1988). Raj Singh (Amir Khan) and Rashmi Rajput (Juhi Chawla), decide to elope when they realize their respective families are sworn enemies and will go to any extent to vanquish their relationship. It gave a very regional twist to the tale of *Romeo and Juliet* and flavoured it with Bollywood music, Hindi ethos and a culturally familiar milieu. A tragic suicide in one family is the trigger for bitter enmity between the two clans. The fathers of the 'madly-in-love' couple connive go to any extent to annihilate their union. The end is as fateful as Shakespeare's play; the 'star-crossed lovers' lie dead near each other, united as souls for an after-life of eternity. The film maker remained faithful to the Shakespearean text to a great extent. His transcreation embodies splendid takes on Hindi dialogues, scenic locales for the shoot and momentous songs such as *Papa kahete hai, Ae mere haumsafar, Gazab hai din* and *Akele hai to kya gam hai.* Indeed, a well-crafted transcreation appealing to the target audience! The complexities are drawn through sub-plots and

comical interludes. Likewise, in *Saudagar* (1991) there is a creative re-enactment of Shakespeare's romance with an engaging plot (to stay in tune with the source text) as well as domestication by blending in the *masala* material quintessential to Hindi celluloid. Foregrounding a tale of three generations, *Saudagar* (which literally means 'merchant'), is presented in flashback. The grandchildren of Raju (Raj Kumar) and Veeru (Dilip Kumar), the seasoned friends-turned-foes are the Romeo-Juliet characters. They are captured by the devious villain Chuniya, which brings in the business deal to get back the captives. Love is challenged through a *sauda* or deal, which brings in a novel perspective to this transcreation.

The beauty of this rendition is the new twist at the end. The grandads who were sworn enemies, unite and fight the villain Chuniya and die in this battle. Consequently, Vasu (Vivek Mushran) and Radha (Manisha Koirala) unite to build an educational trust in the name of their grandfathers. The entire tale is narrated in flashback by the crippled Mandhari to the children in the school. The role of Mandhari can be paralleled to that of Friar Lawrence from *Romeo and Juliet*. A super-duper hit, this film received eight nominations and won two awards including the Best Director for Subhash Ghai at the 37th Filmfare. With memorable songs like *Ilu Ilu, Saudagar sauda kar* and *Imli ka buta,* this transcreation weaves in multiple domestic cultural elements to make it lovable to the audience. Along with *Sanam Teri Kasam* and *Bobby*, here too fidelity to the tragic end is negotiated to make it appealing to the target recipients.

The creativity of rendering the Bard's *Romeo and Juliet* reaches a new zenith with Habib Faisal's *Ishaqzaade* (2010). While Saudagar projected love as a *sauda*, here the political rift between the rival families of Parma Chauhan (Arjun Kapoor) and Zoya Qureshi (Parineeti Chopra) comes with

multiple challenges. *Bobby* had shown the lovers from the Hindu-Catholic communities: here a Hindu boy and Muslim girl fall in love while their families are at daggers drawn and attempt to kill them. The film addresses contemporary issues like premarital sex, inter-religious relationships, caste and the hard-hitting bane of honour-killing. It also re-looks at the gendering of roles and the stereotypes created by a patriarchal world where women's roles are pre-defined by patriarchy. This transcreation was noteworthy for throwing a spotlight on the struggles of Indian widows and portrayed sex workers with sympathy and sensitivity. With familiar locales of Lucknow and U.P. used for the film shoot, this movie is a brilliant re-enactment of Shakespeare's play in Hindi celluloid, weaving in its fabric contemporary issues and political realism.

A brilliant article by Mark Thornton Burnett titled "Shakespeare and Keraliyatha: *Romeo and Juliet*, Adaptation, and South Indian Cinemas", shows how South Indian (Malayalam) cinema has rendered *Romeo and Juliet* in a familiar regional milieu while sustaining the Keraliyatha or Kerala-ness of the transcreation. The two regional Malayalam films, *Annayum Rasoolum* (dir. Rajeev Ravi, 2013) and *Eeda* (dir. B. Ajithkumar, 2018), give Shakespeare a fresh Kerala habitation with a novelty and vigour to cater to the Netflix-gluttons of the digital age. They craftily use religious rituals, familiar political trysts, songs and dance sequences, action-packed dramatic interludes and familiar chocolate-skinned characters to bring in the regional flavours of a well-wrought transcreation.

In a similar experiment, Sanjay Leela Bansali's *Goliyon Ki Rasleela' Ram-Leela* (2013) is worthy of deliberation. This is outstanding domestication of *Romeo and Juliet* in the Indian ambience and ethos. The lovers, Ram (Ranveer Singh) and Leela (Deepika Padukone) battle their warring families, who

cannot forgo their five hundred yearlong enmity. Alongside the passionate love of Ram and Leela, the narrative on screen incorporates filthy politics, people dynamics and twisty sub-plots to end on a tragic note of martyrdom for love sake. When all seems well and the two families embrace, Ram and Leela decide to die at the hands of each other rather than succumb to their families' might. The transcreation transcends the mundane adaptation to incorporate high creativity through ethereal songs, cultural scenes, traditional and locally laced language and familiar landscapes to make it endearing to the Indian Hindi film audience. To reiterate P. Lal, the creative transportation of ethos, mythos and culture from the source text (in this case a Shakespearean play) to the target text (Hindi film) makes these adaptations veritable transcreations.

Conclusion

The transcreations of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* are varied renditions of the source text and offer kaleidoscopic perspectives. A sixteenth-century Shakespearean play has inspired so many Hindi film-makers to render them creatively to suit the Indian cultural ethos. Each rendition is unique, the plot frame is quite similar to the original, but the delivery to the audience of the silver screen is variegated. The filmmakers have negotiated with fidelity to the original plot, particularly its tragic end. *Bobby, Sanam Teri Kasam,* and *Saudagar* have tweaked the end to make it happy for the audience, while the others have faithfully rendered the tragic fate of the lovers. Besides, they have amalgamated cultural nuances, contemporary issues and socio-political themes in their celluloid fabric.

It is unfortunate that many film-makers have not duly credited Shakespeare's play in their credits list. Shakespeare is not even acknowledged for his source play which has inspired these myriad adaptations. The film-makers have used their own

ingenuity and brilliance to make a version in Hindi celluloid to suit the local target audience. They have negotiated with settings and communities, cultural spaces and regional specificities to bring in the Indian ethos or *Bhartiya parampara* in their respective transcreation. The political, religious and geographical elements are regionalized and contextualized in the Hindi regional space. The play's tragic end remains tragic in most silver screen versions, but in films such as *Bobby*, *Saudagar* and *Sanam Teri Kasam*, the happy ending is a new take to please the Indian audience who love them. The use of Hindi film songs, dance sequences, musical interludes, superhit cast and dialogue delivery has given a new face-lift to make these renditions surpass mere adaptations.

The Hindi films discussed above can be comfortably argued to be transcreations of *Romeo and Juliet*, re-written narratives and re-rendered portrayals of Shakespeare's eternal 'star-crossed lovers' and their tragic martyrdom for love on the silver screen. Hindi celluloid has indeed adopted and adapted Shakespeare to amalgamate this Western tale of a politically engineered feud of Montagues and Capulets by giving it a familiar cultural habitation through creative transcreations to make it veritably blend with the Indian cultural milieu and ethos. Such experiments "…string together aspects of a global trans-cultural history of art, across mediums of expression, adapting the English master in a foreign tongue and still managing to keep both cultural elements intact with all their nuances and flavour." (Yadav 10). These transcreations can be seen as emblems of world peace, knitting together the glocal Shakespeare who literally lives his celebrated adage that 'all the world's a stage.'

The global model of Shakespeare is a complex conundrum of myriad textures which transcreates and diffuses itself in varied genres ranging from musicals, plays, animations, web series

and films. The last fifty years have seen Indian cinema acclimatizing itself to the vibes of digitization, being significantly porous to William Shakespeare's plays. The inundations of Shakespeare-adaptations into Hindi celluloid are evident and unavoidable. They appeal to the Hindi audiences, are distinctive and far from being mere adaptations; they clearly deploy paradigms of transcreation. They are triumphant in helping Shakespeare acquire an Indian habitation and regional space. This trend continues in the digital age where the glocal cinematization of Shakespeare only results in the proliferation of the Bard-inspired transcreations. Shakespeare continues to live on through such renditions, inspiring copious filmmakers with his timeless classics.

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NOTES

Translatology: What Hobbles It

P.P. GIRIDHAR

> Two percent of the people think. Three percent think they think and ninety five percent would rather die than think – George Bernard Shaw.

Abstract

Noting that man hasn't as yet awakened fully rationally to the life-giving life-enhancing power and life-refreshing life-sourcing civilization-deepening beauty of literary translation, the Note argues that the possible anodynity of (Literary) Translation Sciences as they obtain today cry out for a good deal of rationally illuminating rigorisation. Part of the anodynity is linguistic (and cultural) naiveté, as we argue. See Giridhar 2005 for a rational elucidation. Lexicalisations like the Sanskrit word dharma for example have been subjected to unacceptably naïve, irrational and supremacist, and hence glaringly unscientific, treatment. This has been demonstrated (See Giridhar op cit). We will talk about it here as well. Part of the problem is the waffly kind of demagoguery that sustains itself over the years. For example, people talk(ed) of eco-translation. Has any piece been translated with eco-translation in mind? If not, what is its status? It, as seems to be the case, exists in the air as cerebral gymnastics? Is there a translation precept which has no conceivable relation to translation praxis? Following Ramayana's several regional avatars, there was some piquant and fashionably exultant buzz about originals undergoing several forms in response to the narrativisation requirements of target cultures. I know of no modern literary piece which has had such avatars because apparently, the translator doesn't know what to do! Does it mean these different avatars, however nebulously defined, are theoretically optional? Adaptation, I rationally assume, is technically different from translation. Essentially, there is no

'adaptation', for example, for discursive or scientific discourse.

Keywords: Translation Sciences, Lexicalisations, Word-to-Word Translation, Narrativisation Requirement, 'Whole Quality', Non-Self-Identicality, Legal Validity, Fidelity, Subjectivities, Rational Rigorisation.

It is now a truth consensually acknowledged that the 'whole quality' of the original text never goes across in translation. Kannada (or any linguistic) dialectal variation is a persuasive example of this fact. The dialectal variants of the verb 'to be' in Kannada viz. *ide*/*untu*/*aite*/*aiti*/*ada* to mean 'is' translate only as *is* in English and nothing else. The words *tamma*, literally 'kid brother' and *tangi* lit. 'kid sister' are used in Northern Kannada land as affectionate address terms for younger boys and girls, much like *awwa* lit. 'mother' and *appa* lit. 'father' are commonly used for elders. *appa* lit. 'father' is used suffixed to sentence units in Southern Kannada land for younger boys! You can't say in English, "Ey Kid brother!' "Ey Father!" or "Ei, Mother!" English does allow though such usage in the form of words like *uncle* and *aunty*. There is precious little the translator can do about this since it is how natural language operates. The Kannada *ri* suffixed to verbs, nouns and when addressing for example husbands seems unrenderable in English. 'Sir' is not quite it! *ri* seems delightfully honorific and intimate at the same time, unlike 'sir'? Imagine a Kannada or Indian housewife calling her husband 'sir'! …

English doesn't distinguish between an honorific *he* and nonhonorific *he*. But Kannada does so that there is a character in a novel I Englished who felt bad because a character used the disrespectful *avanu* 'he' for a character instead of *avaru* the respectful 'he'. There is no way to articulate it in English. The closest parallels may not do.

Instead of *anna* 'elder brother' a character, in his idio-dialect says, *yanna* 'elder brother'. The *anna-yanna* alternation seems elusive: *big brother - dear brother biggie*? *Aayi* is an honourable affectionate suffix used with elderly female names in northern Karnataka. *Dholawwa aayi*, I rendered as, 'the motherly Dholawwa!' Bilinguals may have problems with such translations.

Structural equivalence notwithstanding (See Giridhar 1991), word order could be a translation hassle: A messenger in a Kannada novel reporting to the queen says,

sainyadhikari *rajananna* V

commander-nom(0) king-acc ?

the Kannada sentence leaving what the commander did to the king delightfully open by leaving the sentence-final verb unfilled, unspecified. The (verb-medial) English translation would be the odd

The commander…the king,

which sounds singularly odd as an English translation of the beautifully, if tantalizingly, incomplete Kannada sentence. The queen asks the courier back.

rajanna …?

king-acc

This short pithy query may be translated as the long 'What did the commander do to the king?' and not as the possible but unacceptable '?-king' or as '(the commander) what the king?'

There is no way a code-switched Kannada sentence for instance can go across to English for instance with the same hybridity: In the case of *Gowdre! jaraa naaayi hidiri*! "Respectable Gowda, Sir! Please hold the doggie!", the code-

switched Hindi hedge *jaraa* lit. 'a little' can not go across as a code-switch.

> *majgi baaLa swaada adaava*! "The buttermilk is very toothsome!"
>
> buttermilk-nom(-0) much taste be-prs-3pn

swaada 'tasty' is an Urdu word nativised in Bijapur Kannada. This colourful hybridity as indeed the structural colour of buttermilk deemed as a count noun (and hence the plural in the verb *adaav*a, 'are' *va* signifying plural number) go unrendered. One cannot say 'buttermilk are' in English.

There could of course be and are areas where dialectal variation can be ferried across.

The nonself-identicality or the nonmathematically layered-up design, of natural language and texts, could be another reason for the *whole quality* not going across.

A back translation typically doesn't end up in the original version of the original text. Imagine translating directly back to Spanish a Kannada translation which has come through Icelandic, Tagalog and English. That the good, the great or the arguably final translation is NOT a point but a range has its origin in this nonself-identicality of texts. *The translated source language original sounding like a target language original, the ultimate in all translation, is a range, NOT a point*.

Then there is the Kannada bilingual's genuine dissatisfaction with the English translation of Kannada classical literature, for instance, because of his admittedly and expectedly different reading and cognitive experiences, which could possibly be an inscrutably unobjectifiable and unquantisable entity. *Central to and integral to this nonself-identicality is the absence of word-to-word rendering, not just of multi-word lexicalisations like*

idioms, phrasal verbs, popular adages, of unique daily recyclable linguistic structural templates, and of individual language realisations of universal categories of number, gender, case, tense, aspect, mood etc, but of deeply conventionalised cultural cognitive constructs. In Kannada, for example, (the first meaning is the literal word-to-word one, unacceptable in English and the second is the acceptable free rendering),

nanna magaLu doDDavaLaagiddaaLe
*My daughter has turned big.
'My daughter has come round'

tale oDedu seeru
*breaking the head, one seer (a measure of solids)
'One seer leveling off the contents to the container top.'

hoogi hoogi avLna madve aada
*having gone and gone, he married her!
"Of all persons, he married her!"

Among many such examples is the Hindi sentence:

bukhaar jaane kaa naam hii nahii leetaa
*The fever isn't taking the name of leaving!
"There are no signs of fever leaving."

The translator's alleged and anarchically blown-up runaway freedom with the content of the original, which freedom remains undesirably nebulous it seems to me, possibly proceeds from this iron-clad steel-trap fact of this interestingly and richly open nonself-identicality.

The second content in the following picture, the content that is redone, reformalised, is the centre of contention in translation, where a recontextualisation, reethosisation and re(echo)texturisation, involving the translator's alleged largely undefined runaway freedom, take place. The submission here

is what we can do with this content is not a free-for-all. That will hardly do justice to the power and beauty of the life-giving life-enabling life-refreshing exercise (literary) translation surely is.

form >> content ∞ CONTENT >>form

There is a significant catch here, which, (un)arguably, theoretically reins in this runaway freedom of the translator: there is something to be said about legally valid translation, for example. To be legally valid, a translation has to authentically and comprehensively carry across the spirit and essence of a document. If the translation of a text (a contract, an agreement, a title deed or any text for that matter) is to be legally valid, then the 'whole quality' or at least the whole quality that matters has gone across, to be sure. In which case the first sentence this note struck out with about the 'whole quality' warrants a rethink.

I vehemently argue for some such analogous yardstick in literary translation as well, leading to more rigorous, less airy, analytical and assessment tools, making for translation sciences and literary sciences, music sciences and so on. Mystic mystery-laden inscrutable subjectivities leading allegedly to wondrous and magical creative outcomes that man seems to be compulsively lured by have no inherent self-contained existence and hence cannot take man far.

Now, something like 'anything goes' seems to be trending in the name of transcreation, in the name of creatively braided departure from the source narrative. It is clear that there is a technocratic deductivist substrate, a noninductive springboard, a departure terminal, to every field of human enquiry driven by a set of considerations of reason etc. *The obvious chasm between airy precepts and the solid ground reality of the praxis of translation has gone unacceptably unexplained in Translation Studies*. I know of no literary translation that has

been done going (formally exclusively and exhaustively or holistically) by the linguistic turn or the cultural turn or the power turn or the eco-turn or the geo-turn or the cognitive turn (of Cognitive Translatology) and I don't know what other turns man has invented. Nor have there been several avatars of a modern piece in response to the several narrativisation requirements of different target cultures. Several (Sahithya award-winning or otherwise good) Indian language literary artefacts have been translated into more than fifteen other Indian languages besides English. I don't think these linguistic-cultural renderings into different languages of a single original piece have, due to human intervention, changed in response to the narrativisation requirements of the target ethoses, like Ramayana for example is supposed to have done.

What is the theoretical status of this chaotically exorable stance, of rewriting, which leaves the translator all at sea as to what to do, faced with the original piece and the project of translating it? That is, apart from the fidelity of various hues, what does she do? Think of translation (quite laudably) as a site of cultural traffic and think along the lines of themeing the translation around gender, nation-building, man's evolution, equity, God …? Or is it the case that this viz an unexplicitisable unbridled rewriting is what theory provides for but practitioners are at a creative loss as to how to go about it! I have seen translators who ballyhoo about letting their creative floods flow through these creative theoretical sluice-gates, mocking the fidelity part as *muula-vyaadhi* origin-disease, Kannada for 'piles', do nothing but faithful translation. In case they do other than the fidelity of some sort, has it to do with the translator's whims or is it really theoretically underpinned? *That is, does what she does go beyond, or is determined by something beyond, the individual, by the theoretical spaces of the discipline is a critical question to ask.* Or is it a theoretically allowed hybrid?

There is an inwardly evolutionary rationale of growth in any discipline, the disciplines dutifully steering clear of the creating human subject, or the creating human subject dutifully steering clear of the discipline per se, I assume. Workers in the field ONLY impetus or drive this growth which is directed from inside, as it were. Every field of human inquiry exists inherently, has its own internal logic of growth, much like the human body whose growth and healing are internally driven. The seed is inherent. Outsiders ONLY water, manure, feed, fuel this seed. Physicians only manipulate, supplement etc this internal logic. Field workers in the field of inquiry only realise this potential logic. (See Giridhar 2015 reprinted in Giridhar 2021 for some elucidation). Not externally foisted inputs, much like a literary piece grow or ought to grow organically and not through the whims and fancies of the author's mindset, although to be sure it is the human author who is the creating agent.

I would take, with a bottle of theoretical salt, the tenet of 'prescriptive antiessentialism' that says that to translate a text mechanically as it is without any 'creative' alteration of subjective braiding embroidering etc. is not interesting, because it militates against the dictum of an unwarranted, whimsical and prejudiced 'intervention' by the creating agent.

This viz the fact of the dancer and the dance being separate somewhere and yet indistinguishable, I assume, is the greatest paradox of all open and forward-looking human creation. This creating subject-vitiated human literary creation has happened in Kannada literature, for example, Kannada readers being effete, apparently but surprisingly powerless and dumb witnesses to such a phenomenon.

In Economics, for example, man can manipulate demand or supply but if he can intervene and manipulate the dynamics of the supply-demand interface, then there may not be anything in

this realm of Economics worth studying. Autobiographical narratives of the social facet of natural language, derivative as this facet is, for example, need to be rigorously rationally grounded to be scientific. Or else they border on waffly demagoguery.

Translation Sciences continue to be hobbled by such airy and speciously impressive naive irrationals.

Within the limitations of interlinguistic translation, the idea is to make the reader live the feel, the taste, tang, the tone, the timbre and the soul and essence of the original through the allegedly formidable, impermeably alien language barrier, making the translation more than 'adequate'. Cultures are subsets of what all humans share, which fact should make their vehicles namely linguistic codes pretty commensurable. Nothing human is alien to humans! There is at the same time something about natural language that does make for the slim but real possibility of untranslatability. But man has unfortunately latched on to this to parade the self and supremacism. The Hindi royal *ham* 'we' for referentially singular human first person is an irrefutably great example of pedestal natural languages, it seems to me, although 'pedestal' may not be the word. And I have precious little or next to nothing to say against this delightfully healthy inequity, that Hindi, unlike other natural languages, formal-structurally recognises the great inviolable ontological dignity of individual humans, a dignity that reflects the imperious self-contained personal power that every human must feel, in tango of course with respect and concern for every sentient!

For example, the word *dharma* is a putatively fashionable nontranslatable, for which proposal there is no real rationale. Alienable confluences that linguistic objects are of form and content, pretty much like human marriages, there is nothing about *dharma*, which makes it specially unlike lexicalisations

of any other language. No one talks about this! People forget that the phonetic sequence *dharma* is a linguistic object, encoding culturally, but NOT nebulously, configured human cognition. The amalgamation of a chip from the rock of cognition quarried as meaning with a sound sequence from the world of speech sounds is noticeably quite unlike that of the human sperm with the ovum, the latter of which, unlike the former, results in an ontologically different inalienably singular third entity. The sperm and the ovum do not remain the same in the foetus, but in the case of words, although there is the entity of the constitute word, the constituent form and the constituent meaning remain the same in the new entity. By the way, the rock of cognition that I broach here from which meanings are chipped is a rock all humans share without exception. To say therefore that some humans cannot understand or cannot be made to take the cognitive route to understand a word in any natural language, or that what has been packed in a lexicalisation by an ethos can't be unpacked is typically not tenable. To aver that the passage of time makes it so is puerile.

That a linguistic object in one particular natural language is distinctly special is suspect, to say the least. Ashok Vohra's (2022) elaborately but really irrelevantly laid out concerns in his piece of 'Dharma is Not Rigid, It's Everchanging by Nature' need to be addressed. After declaring that "its meaning continues to be an enigma to scholars" (the identity of these scholars is not revealed!) and that "P.N Kane showed how its meaning finally has settled down to signifying, "the privileges, duties and obligations of a man, his standard of conduct as a member of Aryan community, as a member of one of the castes, as a person at a particular stage of life", he avers that "the difficulty in defining the notion of dharma is further compounded by its different kinds: vyakti dharma, kutumba dharma, samajika dharma, rashtra dharma, varna dharma,

ashrama dharma, guna dharma, svadharma and apad dharma. Each one of them describes a rule of action that may at times conflict with other rules."

Vohra significantly, if not conveniently, forgets hundreds of other dharma collocations possible such as *niirina dharma* water-dharma, *mysuru dharma*, Mysuru-dharma, *maNNina dharma* soil-dharma, *kallina dharma* stone-dharma, *kadalina dharma* sea-dharma, *athithi dharma* guest-dharma, *kaLLana dharma* thief-dharma and so on. It is like saying the grammar of the word *book*, for example, is compounded by the fact that it collocates with so many other locutions, as in Giridhar's book, Chemistry book, cosmology book, soil science book and hundreds of others. "Each one of them (the collocations with the word *dharma*)", he avers, "describes a rule of action that may at times be in conflict with other rules." This conflict is, frustratingly, not exemplified. A lexical item, called a contranym, has antonymous meanings, like the word *sanction* has, as in 'Russia has been sanctioned (penal coercive measure) and 'His loan has been sanctioned.'(authoritative approval). English has lots of contranyms like cleave, before, either, to dust, apology, spike, foment(?) etc. *Dharma* could be one, going by Vohra's averments.

The conclusion then is Vohra's averments cut no new ice either about translation as an idea or about a linguistic object like *dharma*. They are unscientific or antiscientific.

The surprisingly simple submission is that given a linguistic stretch with the word in question, its putatively multifarious senses can be captured by getting at the selectional affinities that obtain between the word and other constituents in the stretch, a sample of which is the following in Kannada:

dharma pathni 'lawfully wedded wife'
niirina dharma 'the nature of water'
dharma chathra 'charitable dwelling house'

nanna dharma ‘my obligatory moral duty’
yuga dharma ‘the being/nature of an era’
dharma ‘religion’ in application forms (alternatively, *matha)*

(To speak authoritatively about language in isolation from real linguistic stretches like phrases, sentences and discourse, like many naïve nonlinguists do, is to waffle in the air, for the expressive homo loquens is homo syntacticus!). This is true of all lexicalized linguistic objects. There is nothing elusively vague about the word *vague*, nothing elusively convoluting about the word *dharma* or elusively obfuscating about the word *obfuscatin*g. This is one of the beauties of natural language, one of its salient characteristics that make it one of the cognitive wonders of nature. And the primary prototypical meaning among the hardly surprising various meanings of the word *dharma* is “structural/ethical template”. The Hindi *pani-puri*, for example, has been defined as “hollowed semolina with potato-garbanzo mash with cumin-tamarind water.” There is no reason whatsoever not to say that what has been packed can be unpacked.

Concluding Remarks

The generic burden of this piece is that there is nothing like unbridled rambling human creativity. It is egregiously irrational to think what is *is* what ought to be. That whatever happens is what ought to have happened. That the mere fact of whatever a writer or painter or musician or sculptor or translator does justifies what he does. *This commonly held ipso facto validity is NOT right it seems to me*. This is reflected in Bassnett’s (1999:11) observation that “the study of translation involves mapping the journeys texts undertake.” This piece is a simple plea for a rational rigorisation of the inner spaces of translation as a human phenomenon. A robustly reasoned creative path is the path to take and the destination likely

would be entirely fair, as in the physical sciences. That one takes it as fair is the horripilating beauty of all rational human enquiries.

Colophon: Thanks are due to Probal Dasgupta for making time, looking it over and 'liking it a great deal,' to Ms Viraj Desai and to editors TT for some edifying comments.

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Kavya and Anuvad in the Age of Bhasha: Reading History of Bangla Literature

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Abstract

This essay discusses translation as the primary factor in the creation of Indian literature in general and Bangla literature in the medieval period. The term "translation" that was used to describe the accommodation of numerous literatures after reception, adaption, influence, and translation in mediaeval Bangla was liberal. We discover several facets and definitions of translation while reading mediaeval Bangla literature, despite the word translation not being used. However, identical actions took place while disguising them as resistance and social welfare. This study does not investigate the original mediaeval texts; instead, it surveys Bangla-language literary histories of Bangla literature and traces how the literary historian(s) viewed the process of mediaeval translation. In order to support the idea of the Indian school of translation, this study incorporated diverse objectives, strategies, and conceptions of the poets involved in translating a book from Sanskrit, Persian, or any other language into Bangla. The focus of this essay is on issues like the origin of language, linguistic and cultural identity, resistance, and the function of translation in relation to all these elements. It also reads mediaeval translation as a component of a larger literary, political, and cultural system.

Keywords: Anuvad, Bhasha, Payar, Lokabhasha, Devabhasha, Desh, Bengali Translation, Indian Translation Theory, Translation as Resistance.

Introduction

The modern Bengali or Bangla language was not known by its name during the Middle Ages. It was only known as "bhasha"

(language). Since Fort William College and other colonial institutions began with their academic interventions in various parts of India, the mediaeval term "bhasha" that was then used to refer to Bangla, began to be popularly identified as Bangla. Since the "Bengali" identity of the language was absent, many poets in mediaeval Bengal translated Sanskrit works into the bhasha but did not refer to the result work as Bengali. During that period, the geo-cultural area that became known as Bangla or Banga was split up into many parts like Banga, Goud, Barendra, Rarh, etc. As opposed to the "Deva-Bhasha," which is Sanskrit, mediaeval poets and translators referred to their literary language as "Desi-Bhasha" or "Loka-Bhasha"[40] (Naskar 225).

Even translation was referred to as writing or composing. Moreover, in mediaeval Bengal, the activity presently referred to as translation or anuvad was never known by that name. All these translations might have been made for free with enough ingenuity on the part of the translators. All the translators were considered as authors in mediaeval Bengal. Writing, or what we now refer to as translating, was a democratization of knowledge that freed it from Sanskrit, which was incomprehensible to the ordinary people.

The translators' objective was to compose their texts for those who do not have access to knowledge, rasa, and theology in Sanskrit, Persian, or any other language. The translators wrote in the introduction of their Kavyas that they composed works

[40] Deshabhasha or Deshibhasha refers to the language of the ordinary people. As an opposite of Devabhasha, Sanskrit, Deshibhasha was the language today known as Bengali. It was also the spoken language of the ordinary people. A historian who subscribes to this idea is Asit Bandopadhyay. By 'popular history', I mean the subsequent writings that promote this idea. For example, there are numerous examples in Sanatkumar Naskar's "Madhyajuger Bangla Anubad Sahitya: Swarup, Patabhumi, Boichitra". (Naskar 225)

into bhasha, which came to be later known as Bangla (Bengali) because they wanted people's welfare. The Hindus heavily used the Sanskrit Mahakavyas, also known as the Itihasas, in their ceremonial, cultural, and religious events (Naskar 226). Therefore, the manuscriptions[41] and translation of the Mahakavyas and Itihasa kathas was a significant addition with new bhasha content. The practice of manuscript culture itself was a way to impart sacred text knowledge to common people.

The protest against the warning typically given in the society favouring the dominance of the Sanskrit language over other languages was expressed through the transcription of oral traditions and the translation of Sanskrit literature and Shastras into bhasha. The act of translating into bhasha was also a form of defiance against a caste's monopoly on "knowledge." It laid the foundation for the growth of bhasha both as a language and class identity. The cautionary tale is typically presented in a community where Sanskrit is preferred over other languages. In this era, the growth and development of translation were first for Desh and then for Loka, and knowledge produced in Deva Bhasha[42] was translated and apparently 'stolen' from heaven for Desh and Loka. Translation practice of the era leads to the localisation of myth and knowledge confined within a particular class for centuries. The translation was indeed meant

[41] I used the word manuscription to mean the writing, which is empowerment as scripted. As Maladhar Basu translated, collected and composed Krishna-Katha of the Bhagabata and from the available oral traditions for the people who could not afford the expenses of arranging Bhagabata performances. In general, translation in written form in the medieval period was empowering in offering texts for reading irrespective of castes. Once you have the manuscript, you do not need to wait for the Brahmin performers to read or perform it for you.

[42] As Sheldon Pollock titled his book, *The Language of the Gods in the World of Men: Sanskrit, Culture, and Power in Premodern India.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009**.** The language of god, which means the bhasha of the Deva, Deva bhasha.

for Desh and Loka by feeding into it the knowledge of Devaloka, Devabhasha, and Deva Sahitya.

The history of continual translation from Sanskrit, Persian, and other languages contributed to the development of bhasha (Bangla as a literary language) in the mediaeval century. Such translation took place through a variety of performance traditions in addition to writing. A narrative of a certain important text, such as the Ramayana or the Mahabharata, may occasionally be formed by writing and performance working together. The Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Puranas, and the translation of Islamic and Persian texts are among the literary works that mediaeval translation is typically categorized as in Bengali literature by literary historians[43].

Translation: Sin and Saviour

Astadasha Puranani Ramasya Charitani Cha

Bhashay Manaba Shrutwa Rourab Narakang Brajet (Naskar 225)

(Eighteen Puranas as well as Rama tales

If the man listens in bhasha

Will be sent to the Rourab, the worst hell). [Translation Mine]

Although the historical accuracy of the lines above cannot be established, it is widely believed in historical discourses that the Brahmins who performed the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, and various Purana from door to door were absolutely petrified of translation because they believed that doing so would lead to their loss of livelihood because it may provide many non-brahmin non-performers of the epics and other sacred narrative

[43] Finbarr Barry Flood called it "medieval multiculturalism" and pointed out that "the concept of multiculturalism fails to do justice to the complex and fluid notions of identity that characterise the highly mobile artisans, merchants and political elites..." (4)

traditions, access to the manuscripts of translation. Another rhymed warning, Keshe, Beshe, Deshe/Tin Sarbaneshe (as mentioned by Arjun Dev Sensarma), was also discovered in Bangla and it implies that these three people—Kashiram Das, who translated the Bengali Mahabharata, Krittibas Ojha, who translated the Bengali Ramayana, and Brindaban Das, who wrote Chaitanya Bhagbata—are damnation.

It may be interesting to note that Maladhar Basu, a Kayastha by caste—then regarded as a Shudra—created the first literary translation in Bengali translation history. In 1473, he started translating Srikrishna-Vijay, and he completed it in 1480. Maladhar Basu, also known as Gunraj Khan, may have worked with the support of the Nawab of Goud, Ruknuddin Barbak Shah, who bestowed this title upon him, according to Khagendranath Mitra, the editor of the Srikrishna-Vijay (Mitra, Khagendranath; iii).

Almost twenty poets from the Bengali, Assamese, and Odia languages have manuscripts of works on Krishna based on the Srimad Bhagwat, according to Mitra. Sankardeva of Assam, Jagannath Das of Odisa, and Raghunath Bhagbatacharya of Bengal are only a few of the well-known Bhagavata authors from various bhashas. "Bhagbat Artha Jata Payare Bandhiya/ Lok Nistarite Jay Panchali Rachiya/ Bhagbat Shunite Anek Artha Chahi/ Te-Karane Bhagbat Geetachhande Gahi,"(Naskar 225), ("All the ideas found in Bhagabata, I composed in Panchali (metre) to save the people/ As it is expensive to arrange the Bhagabata"), wrote Maladhar Basu to his readers. And this possibly became the cause for intense aversion towards literary translation for the Brahmins, or Kathak Thakurs. The translation of religious writings that are widely regarded as sacred by regular people must therefore not be written and read but rather performed, observed, and heard, according to popular narratives that exist in public life. The

reason for this is that the common person's social life is affected because translation itself and the culture surrounding it, were so organic and natural in the mediaeval age.

Arjundev Sensarma, a critic and scholar of medieval Bengali literature, emphasises the Smarta culture and the resistance of Maladhar Basu against it, while Basu was translating his Srikrishna-Vijay (201-202). To be more particular about the caste hegemony Sensarma located translation within the Smarta knowledge culture of Bengal. His study on the “Hindu Bangalir Kavyasamaj", engaged medieval translation within all the intellectual debates of medieval Bengal where significant conflicts have been observed between anuvad into bhasha and Smarta-Sanskriti. Sensarma also claimed that the patronisation of Muslim rulers of Bengal was responsible for the emergence of the translation of Puranas and Kavyas into bhasha (201).

For instance, Paragal Khan understood if he wanted to be famous or ensure the longevity of his name, he should encourage or patronise the poets to translate into bhasha. The poets and translators of this time were the mediators between the treasury of knowledge [in Sanskrit] to which the ordinary people had no access. The language understood only by pundits was translated to convey the meaning to ordinary people, and the translator's role was that of the interpreter.

Translation as Public Affair and Welfare

The most well-liked translation culture in mediaeval Bengal was influenced by the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. However, other patterns in the post-Chaitanyadev era also included translating Puranas, Bhagbata, and literature on the Krishna Leela. The entire narrative of bhasha culture was about resistance, not just against Brahmanism but also against the cultural milieu in which Sanskrit culture was concentrated. It was about the upheaval of the hegemony of Brahminic access to Sanskrit as well. Here, a few illustrations are

introduced to demonstrate how poets from various locations helped to shape the bhasha culture. One of them is by the 17th-century poet Dwija Haridas who wrote the following in his Panchali:

সংস্কৃত নাহি বুঝে সাধারণ জনে। ভাষা কথা কহি আমি তথরি কারণে।।

ভাষাকথা কহি বীর না করহি হলো। হাথ দলিে আগুনে না পোড়ে কোন বলো।। (Naskar 225)

[Common people do not understand Sanskrit/ Hence I narrate in the bhasha

I tell it in bhasha; please do not ignore/ Fire always can burn your hand] (Translation mine.)

Such prelude claims that the translation is a public affair and directed for general welfare too. Through such literary works, early translators wanted to engage people with literary culture. Translation into bhasha appeared as the most powerful medium for educating people in their language. The translation itself was a process of making people attached to literary texts/cultures.

And thus, translation creates more inclusive bridges between people and culture or religion. As described by different poets, as Dwija Haridas also mentioned, translating was a deep concern about society and affection for the people. The translation appeared not only as a creative literary work but also as an emotional task. Another such example comes from the poet Pitambar who wrote Nala Damayanti in 1544 under the patronage of king Samar Singh of Kamta. He wrote,

পুরানাদি শাস্ত্রে যহেি রহস্য় আছয়। পণ্ডতিে বুঝয় মাত্র অন্যে না বুঝয়।।

একারণ শ্লোকভাঙ্গি সবে বুঝিবার । নজি দশেভাষা-বন্ধে রচযিো পয়ার।। (Naskar 225)

[The beauty of the Puranas / Understood by the scholars only/ I write these slokas, so all understand / One must write in payar of one's language] (Translation mine)

Amazingly, most poets in "Deshi-bhasha" (spoken language of common people), or Bengali came to write literature to bridge between the academic or literary and common people. This self-appointed responsibility of educating typically shows literature as activism and poets as socio-literary activists. We can also find that translation in Deshabhasha or Deshibhasha comes within the contact zones of the people, land, language, culture, and knowledge. The third example I would like to refer to is the order of Paragal Khan, ruler of Chattogram, when he asked Srikar Nandi to translate. His instruction was:

সংস্কৃত ভারত না বুঝে সর্বজন । মোর নবিদেন কছিু শুন কবগিণ ।।

দশেীভাষে এই কথা করয়িা প্রচার । সঞ্চরউ কীর্তি মোর জগ ভতির ।। (Naskar 226)

[Everybody does not understand Sanskrit here/ please listen to me, oh poets! /

Write literature in Desibhasha/ And let people know about my contributions] (Translation mine)

The mediaeval royal administrators recognised literature as a potent tool for mass communication and archiving. Since these texts were cultural and religious jewels of the communities and people passed down their knowledge of their contents orally from generation to generation, many of them encouraged their translation into bhasha. Therefore, bhasha literature may be the most effective means of implanting their names in the collective memory of the people.

Most translations were made in opposition to Brahminism and their use of Sanskrit, not to stop the spread of Islam. Desh was also being imagined while being translated into the indigenous tongue. The translation was done in Deshi bhasha. Poets and other authors realised that only via bhasha one could imagine Desh. As a result, these translations of the Bhagavata, Puranas, Ramayana, and Mahabharata proved to be helpful for the creation of the Desh and constructed the bhasha.

Translation and Formation of Bangaliyana (Bengaliness)

There is a regional division in the reception of Krittibas's Ramayana, which was more prevalent in southwest Bengal. On the other hand, Adbhut Acharya was popular in northeast Bengal. The regional representation and identity may have been reflected in different translations. Somewhere the culture of Goud was prominent, while elsewhere, the culture of north-east Bengal was prominent.

This is another significant finding that the translation of this era reflects, although the language is the same. Kalidas Ray wonders how Krittibas may remain the most famous translator of the Ramayana. He suggests that many translations written at different times appropriated the name of Krittibas, so he remained so widely and continuously popular (Bandopadhyay 53). It is also a fact that different kinds of performers, Kathak Thakurs (storyteller) and Pala Gayak[44] (musical performer) proved to be the symbiotic force in the culture of medieval translation practice. They adapted available texts of the Ramayana for performance and thus gave the Ramayana stories their universal appeal. This may be the reason for unidentified Ramayana stories to be found in folklife and the

[44] *Kathak Thakur*s were itinerant performers who narrate and sing the stories from *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata. Palagan* is an indigenous form of musical performance. The content of this performance are mainly stories from Ramayana, Mahabharata and other myths.

oral tradition. I suggest that this is also another significant finding of this era about translation. Through performance traditions, different poets of the medieval period contributed to creating folk Ramayanas. So, the translation of the Ramayana into a single manuscript appeared as an unidentified universal narrative of the folk or oral Ramayana.

Krittibas's translation of the Ramayana into Bengali (early 15th century) was in Panchali[45] form, perhaps the first generic type. "Krittibasi Ramayana," as it is popularly known, originally titled as ShriRam Panchali, gradually became part and parcel of Bengali culture. There are instances of its huge reception across the time in Bengali culture. The poetic genius of Krittibas was deeply rooted in the performance forms and traditions ingrained in the culture of Bengal. Translations into Panchali forms received a tremendous public response as these were also musical and were successfully adapted by the musical groups and performers. The text and its performance ensured the afterlife of these texts in public life—multiple rebirths in different mediums rooted these texts deeply in the Bengali culture.

However, Sukumar Sen was skeptical about the time of Krittibas and questioned earlier conjectures. Sen finds remarkable differences between the translations of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata in Bangla and holds that while Ramayana was translated in Panchali style meant mainly for singing, the Mahabharata, although claimed as Panchali, was meant primarily for reading. Since the Ramayana translation

[45] Panchali is an oral narrative that is either read to music or performed live with an instrument. This was frequently utilised in the creation of epic or long narrative poems. This form or metre was employed by numerous poets of the 19th century who wrote literary epics. There are various panchalis, including the popular Laxi Panchali, which is read by the women to a specific tune in Bengali Hindu households.

became part of Hindu ritual and was performed in formal programs, it seems the translators of the Ramayana were the Brahmins, and the translators of the Mahabharata were of other castes, mainly Kayastha (Sen 208).

This appears to find corroboration in the history of different dynasties and royal courts' manners, where the tradition of reading Mahabharata existed. The first translation of the Mahabharata into Bangla is Paragali Mahabharat (Pandav Bijay) by Kabindra Parameswar (1515), who wrote it on the orders of Paragal Khan, a governor of Sultan Hossain Shah. Many translations of the Mahabharata story into Bangla, like Aswamedha Parba (1552-53) by Ramachandra Khan, a marmanubad[46] of the Jaimini Samhita. Another, Aswamedha Parba (1567) was translated by Dwija Raghunath, as Sen informs.

Asit Bandopadhyay, in his Bangla Sahityer Itibritta says that except for Kashiram Das in the 17th century, other translators could not show such poetic skill in their translations (Bandopadhyay 426-427). Bandopadhyay shows concern about the quality of translation in comparison with other types of creative writings and their reception while accepting that the translations of Purana, Bhagabata, the Ramayana, and the Mahabharata introduced a sense of literariness in public life as a significant role of translation in medieval Bengal was beginning to be acknowledged. Krittibas was popular among the people and poets alike.

His Ramayana was copied and circulated widely, but many manipulations have been observed in the manuscripts on closer examination. The continuing popularity in the reception of Krittibas's Ramayana establishes him as the most famous

[46] *Marmanubad* is a process of translation that stands not for the word-to-word translation but the translation of the essence or flavour of the theme or translation of essence.

translator of Ramayana. According to Bandopadhyay, when Serampore Mission decided to print Bengali Ramayana, they considered Krittibas's Ramayana, which was the most popular and most circulated Ramayana text[47].

Asit Bandopadhyay adds that the manuscript of Shataskandha Ravan Vadh [preserved in the manuscript archive of the Sahitya Parishad, Kolkata] shows more similarities with the Adbhut Ramayana. This is because the famous Adbhut Ramayana was the translation and adaptation of the stories from various regions of Bengal. Therefore, it can be assumed to be a compilation of other Ramayana stories, even including the folk stories. This is how such translations connect different forms of creative and cultural expressions of the community.

Methodology of Translation

According to Asit Bandopadhyay, Adbhut Acharya's translation of the Ramayana is a bhabanubad (440). The concept of bhabanubad indicates an easy reception of translations. Adbhut Acharya's translation did not follow the Sanskrit text of Adbhut Ramayana yet was accepted as a translation. The people quickly acknowledged the existence of different versions of Ramayana stories, and these stories were rooted in the narrative tradition of the common folk. The

[47] A.K Ramanujan claims the existence of *Ur*-text of *Ramayana* and its many versions or variants. I would like to argue that there is no single *Ur*-text but many *Ur*-texts. Krittibasa was so popular that many texts claimed his name, and there was manipulation by the *Lipikaar*s. This makes questions about authenticity problematic. The people who appropriated Krittibasa sometimes negatively impacted his popularity. They had only Krittibasa in mind as the original poet. They were not bothered about Valmiki. General people in Bengal knew Krittibasa's bhasha *Ramayana* or *Ramkatha* in *Bhasha*. This is how Krittibasa appeared as the original. Many versions of Krittibasa will be found, yet there's no meaning in searching for the 'original' Krittibasa. In this sense, I would like to argue; translation also may appear as original text or *Ur*-text.

translation styles of the medieval era introduced interesting variations and have been described with terms like bhabanubad by Asit Bandopadhyay and marmanubad by Sukumar Sen. These two terms suggest the same meaning, that is, the translation of the essence of the main flavour or theme of the source text as carried into the target text. Asit Bandopadhyay says Adbhut Acharya's translation is a bhabanubad of Ramayana, though he translated all the seven parts of the Sanskrit Ramayana. It means that translators of the medieval era appreciated the differences in translation methods, but perhaps this was not explicitly expressed or explained.

When the source and the target texts were found far from each other's narrative, then the target text was called anukaran (imitation) of the source text. As has been widely discussed, Kalidasa's Meghadutam created the style of "Duta-kavyam" in Sanskrit. I think it is best described as anukaran, a generic translation of Meghadutam. I believe it is significant that followers of Kalidasa and later literary critics accepted the tradition of Duta-kavyam as a sub-genre. But in Bengali literary history, generic translation is not acknowledged as translation. Only the word-to-word or thematic/ narrative translations is recognized as translation.

The fact that most translations of the Puranas, the Bhagbata, the Ramayana, and the Mahabharata, come from multiple sources is another intriguing aspect of these translations. Short pieces, narratives, stories, and experiences from various readers are incorporated by translators into the final product. This means that the translation incorporates whatever information the translators had access to and calls it a rendition of the Ramayana. This inclusive translation method, which was popular among Bengali translators in the Middle Ages, may have made the texts more approachable and accessible to the public. They probably saw this approach as the simplest

and most logical way to communicate knowledge that was already there in Sanskrit and intertwined with the desi.

Asit Bandopadhyay also uses rupantar while discussing Adbhut Acharya's changing poetic form from prose narrative to a metric narrative (441). Rupantar—literally, 'changing form' is another equivalent for the word translation, though limited use. While discussing the work of Ghanashyam Das and his peers, we find them using the word anusaran (to follow) along with anukaran to talk about the process of adaptation of the Ramayana story. Anusaran and the word Anubad both the words are both meant for an almost similar object. Asit Bandopadhyay used the words Anukaran and Anusaran as the methodology of adapting. He used these to discuss how the text was translated. The word which appeared as the opposite of Anusaran is Moulik, which means original or originality. Anusaran, in this context, is used to signify a kind of translation (441).

Dwija Ganganarayana's Ramleela and Ghanashyam Das's Sitar Banabas (1618) were translated for palagana, a performative form of enactment with songs. Asit Bandopadhyay also focused his attention on Chandrabati's Ramayana. Chandrabati is the first known woman poet of Bengali literature, and her Ramayana was performed only by women.

The entire manuscript of this Ramayana was not readily available. Ramayana scholar Chandrakumar Dey discovered it and published it in three parts. He commented, "ময়েরোই ইহার গায়ক, ইহার কবি স্ত্রীলোক, ইহার শ্রোতা ও গায়করোও অধকিাংশ স্থলে স্ত্রীলোক" (This Ramayana is performed by women. Women make up the audience and the poets.) (Cited in Bandopadhyay 450). This Ramayana mainly was influenced by folk narratives. Bandopadhyay wonders if Chandrakumar Dey's editing disfigured the language of the original text as the language pattern found in Dey's edition is more similar to the

language of the 20th century and in many places appears as a language of modern poets. Asit Bandopahyay compared extracts from Madhusudan Dutta's poems which he found very much like Chandrabati Ramayana.

However, some of these texts show the non-involvement of women in socio-cultural behaviour and political events. The texts, unless performed, were also not accessible to women. But it is evident when the chance presented itself, women raised their voices and resisted the patriarchal norms. Several versions[48] of the Ramayana have been found, the translations by different poets who translated different sections from the epics to emphasise various aspects of society (450). Chandrabati's translation is highlighted as a feminist text showing women's empowerment in mind and spirit. The text is also a symbol of resistance against the patriarchal society. Thus, translation played a significant role in reshaping the social psyche of the Hindu community.

Moreover, many mediaeval texts by translators are also the products of collaborative authorship. One can only examine and raise questions about their 'authenticity'; hardly anything is verifiable due to a lack of supplementing texts and necessary documentation. The present-day books or ancient and mediaeval manuscripts have their history of the journey. In this history of travel, a significant amount of manipulation occurred with a particular manuscript due to the extreme popularity of the epics, which were the cultural backbone of the society. There are many anulikhan[49] found in the name of

[48] The words 'version' or 'variant' are used by A.K. Ramanujan. This argument acknowledges the existence of at least one Ur-text, Valmiki's *Ramayana*. There are parallel *Ramakathas* prevalent apart from versions of Ramayana. Many translators incorporated folk *Ramkatha* in their translations of the *Ramayana*. (25)

[49] *Anulikhan* means copying some text almost verbatim; there may be some additions and deletions made by the copier.

Kashiram Das; there are debates on the authenticity of many parts of Mahabharata he had translated.

Kalidas Ray and other literary historians also raise the authenticity of the translations and the question of authorship. Manuscripts were handwritten and copied by the Lipikars[50], so there was a great possibility of manipulation and editing as per popular demand. This, too, is an acknowledged fact about translation in the mediaeval era. Such a process also suggests how living was the entire process of writing and translating Kavyas like the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Sanatkumar Naskar agrees with the opinion of Sukumar Sen that the birth of translation in the medieval period took place through oral culture. The Brahmanical hegemony of language, knowledge, and religion was resisted through the oral performance tradition of the Kathak Thakur and the Geyaa (something which can be sung) (227).

The Mangal Kabyas (13th–18th century) and translation were both parts of Bangla literature's mediaeval age. Popular translations of the time were performed as well as published in manuscript form. These translators like Pala Gayak and Kathak Thakur were extremely well-liked. A text remained in numerous versions during the continual process of translation in mediaeval Bengal, whereby it developed its own culture or tradition. Since its inception, Krittibas' translation of the Ramayana dominated the socio-cultural spheres, and he was recognised as the most well-known Ramayana translator in

[50] Gerald L. Bruns calls manuscripts 'open text'. By 'closed text', he means "simply the results of an act of writing that has reached a final form." (113); the existence of *Lipikaar* as a professional group in society proves that there was no end or final shape for textual imagination in manuscript forms. In manuscript culture, the text has various and multilayered texts, so the text is 'open text'. The translation is also a never-ending process and therefore remains open until the print closes it.

Bengal. Krittibas' name was found on numerous texts[51], which may not be something he does. Kalidas Ray, a critic, asserts that Krittibas' translation was supported since he was born into an educated class (53). But it is also a testament to his skill, not merely the stifling hold of the traditions.

Kathak Thakur and Pala Gayak performed religious narratives for ordinary people. They were also responsible for building the environment to receive Sanskrit religious texts among ordinary people. The performance tradition of Bengal also constructed the culture of translation and prepared the ground for written translation. The oral tradition was also responsible for initiating the culture of bhasha; the story of Being bhasha was mainly their enterprise. Another significant finding of this era is that bhasha also developed the idea of Desh. Translators always mentioned Bangla as a Deshi bhasha, and translation happened for the folk or Deshi people.

Conclusion

According to translation theorist Itamar Ivan Zohar, translation takes place when a particular polysystem has any one of the following conditions: "(a) when a poly-system has not yet been crystallized, that is to say, when a literature is "young," in the process of being established; (b) when a literature is either "peripheral" (within a large group of related literature) or "weak," or both; and (c) when there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in a literature" (47). In the case of Bangla, the project of building bhasha was initiated by religious education, resistance to the Brahminical hegemony, and strengthening expressivity through bhasha. Translation also introduced new vocabularies and literary language into bhasha.

[51] In manuscript culture, many educated people copied texts and were called *Lipikaar*.

The project of Bhasha through these translations of the epics mentioned above was a reality in Bengal and other parts of India too. Surprisingly, similar terms and ideas were introduced and used in different regions of India for the linguistic shift of literary texts.

For example, according to Tymoczko, incidentally, Malayalam, too, uses an indirect indicator for a translation that many other Indian languages use, of prefixing to the title of a text the word bhasha to indicate that it is a translation from Sanskrit, e.g., Bhasha Ramayana, Bhasha Mahabharata, etc. Though bhasha means merely 'speech' or 'language'… it has come more specifically to denote a modern Indian language. Indeed, any current Indian language is distinct from Sanskrit… and it did not need to be further specified to be a 'translated' Ramayana; the word 'bhasha' itself served as a signifier of its translated condition (cited in Theo Hermans).

Bhasha shows the relation between Sanskrit and modern Indian languages. As Tymoczko mentions, "Bhasha Hamlet" is not possible. Bengali translations of texts from Persian never used the word 'bhasha' for them. Neither Alaul nor his instructor used the term bhasha. This was more about the sentiment for Deshi Bhasha, Loka Bhasha. Even the Bengali translation of Sanskrit texts never carried the word bhasha as a prefix, unlike Malayalam and Hindi translations, as mentioned by Tymoczko. Saji Mathew uses the word Bhasha even in translation from the Indian language into English and English into the Indian language. Mathew takes bhasha as a unifying term for all modern Indian languages. I quote, "... there are so few bhasha translations of English texts as compared to the enormous industry of English translations of bhasha texts." (177).

It is intriguing to see how several Indian languages developed a robust translation culture during the Mediaeval Era and

created a distinct geo-linguistic space known as bhasha. Many modern Indian languages originated or started to get shape in the age of the bhasha, which corresponds to the pre-colonial era, and translation from Sanskrit and Persian made it possible. Although I studied the history of translation in Bengali, the references I cited in the preceding paragraph and the brief history of other Indian literature that I came across made me realise that the history of mediaeval Indian literature may be referred to as the age of bhasha because translation served to build bridges between literary and common, mythical and local, and Sanskrit (and Persian) and modern Indian languages (the Deva and Deshi).

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BOOK REVIEWS

Eye-Tracking Processes and Styles in Sight Translation

SU, WENCHAO. 2020. *Eye-Tracking Processes and Styles in Sight Translation*. Singapore: Springer.

Reviewed by OBED EBENEZER .S

James S. Holmes, in "The name and nature of translation studies" (1972), the foundational paper that laid down the possibilities of Translation Studies as a separate academic discipline, characterised Translation Studies (TS) as Pure and Applied TS, of which Pure TS was further categorized into theoretical and descriptive translation studies. He then classified Descriptive translation studies (DTS) into three kinds: product-oriented, function-oriented and process-oriented DTS, in which, process-oriented DTS "concerns itself with the process or act of translation itself" (2001:177). As a systematic area of enquiry, the study of the process of translation or "translation process research" (TPR) began with rational approaches based on linguistic and psychological theories, such as Bell's (1991) translation model describing how the activity of translation takes place. With advances in medical technology and Information Technology (IT) in the 21st C, techniques such as screen-recording, key-logging, eye-tracking, Electro Encephalography (EEG), and functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) began to be applied in TPR to understand the different cognitive processes that occur during the activity of translating. Eye-tracking, which involves the recording and analysis of the movements of the eyes during different activities, has seen many takers in TPR. Typically, this method is applied to study computer-aided translation (CAT), where the translator looks at the screen on which the source text (ST) is displayed on one part, and the rest of the space is used to display the target text (TT) as the translator produces it. As both the ST and the TT are displayed on the

same screen, it becomes easier to track and record the movements of the eyes.

In this book, Wenchao Su applies the technique of eye-tracking to investigate the process of sight translation between Chinese and English, wherein a written text in the SL is translated orally into the TL. Sight translation involves a shift between the textual and the oral, from written to verbal, combining the aspects of both translations in their textual form, and interpretation. *Eye-Tracking Processes and Styles in Sight Translation* is the publication of Su's doctoral dissertation undertaken at the University of Macau, in book form. It can be a useful resource for researchers aiming to undertake studies that employ eye-tracking as a tool. This book is also a part of the series titled *New Frontiers in Translation Studies* that has been pushing the boundaries of interdisciplinarity in TS and has brought out 32 research-based volumes from 2015 onwards, such as *Researching Cognitive Processes of Translation* (2018), *Eco-Translatology* (2020), *Cognitive Processing Routes in Consecutive Interpreting* (2021) and *Advances in Cognitive Translation Studies* (2021).

Eye-Tracking Processes and Styles in Sight Translation is structured like a thesis, with five chapters in addition to the introduction and conclusion. The "Introduction", lays down the organization of the volume, outlining the purpose and aims of the study, and a brief overview of the reasons for the choice of the topic, and its significance. Some of the major issues and questions that this research seeks to address are: the differences in eye-movements in the different stages of sight-translation, differences between the eye-movement patterns of novice and professional translators, and responses to translation problems, in addition to examining local styles (at the lexical level) and global styles (common across the whole text).

Chapter 2, titled "Issues and Approaches to CTIS", discusses some of the methodologies such as "psycholinguistic, behavioural, corpus-based, and neurological approaches" (9) that have been used in cognitive translation and interpreting studies (CTIS) to understand the cognitive processes that take place during the activity of translation and interpretation, and especially those that have implications on sight translation. Psycholinguistic approaches have commonly used think-aloud protocols (TAPs) and key-logging to shed light on translation strategies and translation problems; behavioural methods show how novice translators approach and solve translation problems as compared to professional translators; corpus analyses highlight the patterns and processing routes of the translator, and neurological approaches reveal the activations of various regions in the brain during translation. The present study employs the behavioural approach as the behaviour/movement of the eyes during sight translation is what is being examined here.

"Translation Style in Sight Translation", the third chapter, takes up style, not as the linguistic or stylistic features of the text, but rather, considers it as the behavioural patterns of translators. The author begins with a discussion of the features of sight translation, and how it differs from the interpretation and written translation. Written translation can be read and revised at a convenient pace, whereas sight translation is a one-time action under possible time constraints. With respect to interpretation, however, the ST is available for a second (or more) reading enabling greater comprehension, lesser memory load, and higher flexibility of time in sight translation. There are two types of sight translation: unrehearsed sight translation, where the translation occurs impromptu, as soon as the text is given; and rehearsed/prepared sight translation, where text can be read, notes prepared and draft translations be created. Similarly, style too can be categorized as global and local,

based on the approach towards the text. In addition, the behavioural patterns of professionals as compared to novice translators also differ. Global behaviour refers to how the text is approached in its entirety. Drawing from previous studies on written translation, Su asserts that behavioural patterns vary during the different phases of translation, such as the preparatory phase, the reading phase and the actual translation phase. The coordination style, that is, the organization from reading to speaking, from comprehension to production of speech is also investigated. In simultaneous interpretation (SI), this had been studied with respect to the Ear-Voice Span, that is, the time-gap between hearing and the production of the interpretation. In written translation, coordination had been studied with respect to the Eye-Key Span (EKS), that is, the time-gap between reading and the production (typing) of the translation. Combining these two methodologies, coordination in sight translation can be analysed with respect to the Eye-Voice Span (EVS), which is the time lag between reading and the production of the oral translation. EVS measurements can reveal behavioural characteristics of professionals and novice translators that differ from each other. Local behaviour, on the other hand, refers to the approach toward the text at the lexical level. This involves the identification of translation problems and the strategies used to negotiate such issues using subjective methods such as translator notes, concurrent TAPs (during translation), and retrospective (after translation) TAPs, and/or objective methods such as eye-tracking and key-logging.

The fourth chapter, titled “Eye-Tracking Method”, lays down the details of the experimental study used for data collection. The sample population comprised of two groups: nine professional interpreters and thirteen novices, sight translating from Chinese to English. Data was collected between July and December 2018. Language proficiency and translation

competence were self-rated. Four source texts in Chinese which were comparable in terms of difficulty, word count and lexical variation, and containing a similar number of types of translation problems were selected. The Tobii TX300 eye tracker was used along with the Tobii StudioTM 3.4.8 software for stimulus presentation and data collection. The font used for Chinese letters was Microsoft YaHei size 19 double spaced. Participants were given fifteen minutes for advance preparation. The actual oral translation was recorded, and participants reviewed the recordings. The author then discusses the statistical methods used for the analysis of the data. Linear Mixed Effects Regression (LMER) models were used for analysis. Such models are useful to examine trends at both global and local levels, especially when the sample sizes are small, and there are fixed effects and random effects. The chapter also includes the Chinese texts which were used for the study and their English translations, as appendices.

In Chapter 5, "Global and Local Styles of Sight Translation", Su describes the results of the experiment in light of their implications upon style. Task-time (TT), fixation count (FC), saccadic amplitude (SA), fixation duration (FD), pupil dilation (PD) and (eye-voice span) EVS were used as measures for global styles. It was found that overall, the preparation phase involved higher measures of TT, FC and SA and lower FD and PD than actual sight translation. With respect to professionals, the overall speed was faster, with lesser FC during the preparation stage. Novices took a comparatively longer time during the preparatory phase, with higher FC. However, during the actual sight translation, there was no significant difference in the measures TT, FC, FD, SA, and PD between professionals and novices. Gaze behaviour patterns with respect to FD and PD were consistent in both stages. That is, higher measures of FD and/or PD in the preparation phase corresponded to higher values of FD and/or PD in the actual

sight translation phase, and vice versa. EVS measures were larger for professionals, indicating that they tended to read ahead or scan larger groups of words than what was required for immediate translation. Translation problems were identified as those words containing peculiar Chinese features and characters and were characterized by longer first fixation duration (FFD) and total fixation duration (TFD) and EVS were used for local styles. Professionals were found to have made fewer errors, disfluencies (breaks in speech), omissions and expression errors when compared to novices, but also committed higher values of meaning errors.

"Gaze Behaviors, Interpreting Styles, and Language Specificity", the sixth chapter, discusses the findings of the study and their significance, throwing light upon the various cognitive processes in sight translation. Actual sight translation demanded more cognitive processing and load as revealed by the longer fixation durations and greater pupil dilation. Advance translation (preparation) required less cognitive load but consumed more time. Professional translators spent lesser time and lesser fixation counts than novices in the preparation phase. Professional interpreters also exhibited the tendency to read ahead while verbalizing the translation as shown by higher values of EVS. Novices tended to utilize higher cognitive loads in the processing of problematic words in the ST as revealed by longer fixation durations. The study also revealed that the eyes fixate on the problematic word just before verbalizing its translation, revealing the cognitive processing and the refreshing of active memory. Translation problems also tended to interrupt and delay the smooth flow from comprehension to the production of interpretation.

The seventh and final chapter, titled "Looking Ahead" summarizes the study and suggests avenues for further research on similar topics in the future. Because the study

showed that professional interpreters require lesser time and cognitive effort than novices, while at the same time, producing more fluent and error-free translations, the author emphasises the need for adequate training in translation and interpretation. Su also acknowledges the limitations of the study, which included the comparatively small size of the sample population and the fact that the study was carried out in laboratory settings which could affect the ecological validity of the study. In addition, only words which were identified prior to the experiment as problematic were analysed. However, other words which were not considered to cause translation problems resulted in errors, disruptions and higher fixation times were not examined. This gap opens up space for further research in this area. Moreover, future studies can move beyond how translators respond to translation problems and investigate the cognitive processing of not just style, but performance as well.

Eye-Tracking Processes and Styles in Sight Translation is a handy resource for researchers who are working in the area of sight translation, simultaneous interpretation, consecutive interpretation and written translation as it draws from previous studies in these fields, and also reveals findings that would be useful in the mentioned fields. In addition, it also contains practical material that would provide insights to researchers using eye-tracking as a methodological tool. However, this book holds the basic structure of a thesis and might cause the lay reader to lose interest. The book assumes that the reader is familiar with the methodology of eye-tracking, and fails to introduce and explain the design of the eye, common eye movements and what they indicate. Therefore, it might be confusing to a person unfamiliar with the terms and methodology of eye tracking. The reviewer recommends Andrew T. Duchowski's Eye *Tracking Methodology* (2017), and *Eye Movement Research* (2019) edited by Christoph Klein

and Ulrich Ettinger, as additional resources for readers who are new to eye-tracking. Though neuroimaging methods are able to provide deeper and more extensive data on the function of the brain during translation, the equipment costs are very high and require steep learning curves and often must be done with collaboration between different institutions as a researcher in literature/linguistics/translation studies alone does not usually possess the qualifications or credentials required to carry out such studies. As a methodological approach, however, eye tracking holds much potential for an investigation into the cognitive processes in translation and interpretation, combined with the relatively lesser costs and less-steeper learning curves. Sight translation is a much overlooked sub-discipline in TS, though it is frequently applied in our day-to-day life. Research in translation and interpreting studies has been seeing increasing studies, especially from China, that use eye-tracking as a major methodological approach. Such explorations hold great potential in a multilingual country like India as well, and similar approaches from the Indian context can add to the understanding of the cognitive processes involved in translation and interpretation.

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TRANSLATIONS

Spark

Tankho by Himanshi Shelat in Gujarati
Translated by PRATIXA PAREKH

Translator's Note

Translation is closely allied with the emergence and advancement of multiple languages and this activity has passed through various phases – from the earlier perception of being considered as a 'secondary activity' which does not pass beyond linguistic level to be later considered as socio-cultural phenomenon to finally achieve the status of creative act in form of 'Transcreation' (Lal 34). The emergence of 'Translation Studies' as a major branch of comparative and cultural studies and the emergence of the booming translation industry during the twentieth century helped to liberate translation from the narrow notion of what Bassnett has called "...the rendering of a source language (SL) text into the target language (TL)" (Bassnett 11) and establish itself an a creative form of art.

For a country like India which is a unique mosaic of multiplicity of languages and cultures, translation has been a part of life since the time immemorial to negotiate the socio-cultural and linguistic diversities and the free adaptations of our scriptures during the past many centuries bear witness to it. Earlier translation activity flowed from Sanskrit into other languages like Prakrit, Apabhransha and modern Indian languages and later with the arrival of the British into English and other European languages. English gradually became a bridge to connect the cross-cultural divergences and in recent times translation activity is taking place at multiple levels in form of the adaptation of scriptures and literature into movies, dance and musical performances, animations etc. thus opening up many possibilities of creative transformation.

If we consider the particular case of Gujarat, we can notice a dearth of translation from Gujarati into other Indian languages as well as English. For a prolong period of time Gujarat has been in the position of recipient to the literature of other languages especially from Sanskrit, English and Bengali. To quote Rita Kothari, "The difference between what has gone out of Gujarat into other languages (including English) and what has come into the Gujarati language from outside sources is staggering...approximately thousand works from Indian and some European languages exist in Gujarati translation...In contrast, very little from Gujarati literature has made inroads into other languages, particularly English." (138) In the last few years, it has become a matter of serious concern for writers and critics of Gujarati literature that some of this literature should be available to the audiences outside Gujarat. When compared with the other languages like Tamil, Malayalam or Bengali, Gujarat has a meagre quantity of Gujarati texts translated into other regional Indian languages as well as English.

This translation is undertaken with an aim to give a glimpse of Gujarati literature to the non-Gujarati Indian as well as Western readers and for this purpose I have chosen a short-story originally published in a collection of short-stories titled *Sanjano Samay* (The Evening Time) by a renowned author Himanshi Shelat. Himanshi Shelat (1947) is a critically acclaimed author of the Post-modern Gujarati literature. What makes her stories noteworthy is her portrayal of the psychological bent and sentiments of her characters in various situations in subtle yet minute details. Apart from being a writer, she has also been involved in many social welfare activities related to the women of red light areas and many of her stories (including the present one) depict the theme based on her experiences of working with this stratum. The present

story is a brilliant piece of narration which connects two women from completely different social strata namely a poor sex-worker and a woman from a well-to-do family in a very sentimental way where at one point their social as well as financial differences seem to dilute under the common link they share – of their being women in the patriarchal world. The central character Purna's initial detest for a sex-worker who approached her doorstep turns into sympathy for her financial dependency on men for her livelihood to her ultimate self-realization at the end that perhaps her own so called happy married life is somehow dependent on the existence of such women. The story very delicately yet firmly establishes a connection between two completely separate worlds – our so called reputed society and the disgraceful lanes of the red light areas and hints an inter-dependency of both on each other for their survival and reputation. Along with that the story also hints at the pathetic condition of women in both these societies who had to undergo much physical and psychological turmoil at the hands of men even though their worlds seem to be wide apart.

Shelat's women characters exhibit a different kind of feminist consciousness. They hardly rebel or voice their feelings openly even though they are well-aware of their marginalized status and exploitation. The same is the case with the central character of this story – Purna. Although being an educated and modern woman, she hesitated to ask for any explanation from her husband, at the end, regarding her speculation about his involvement with any prostitute and thus suffers silently. In the same line, the sex-worker who visited her house also felt helpless when her customer disappeared without paying her money resulting into her suffering. When questioned in this regard, Himanshiben replied : "In our society it is not easy to change our circumstances or somebody else's or to change the

scenario of relationship till you are aware. Awareness is more important than doing something physically different. It is not easy for a woman to leave not because of her status but because of her emotional bonding. It is a different kind of sensitivity but people do have it, very rare though but as I have it, I could find it in others, in my characters. They have, at times, a very strong reason to leave, still they decide to hang on. Their conscious decision to lead such life is a different type of rebel. Leaving everything is easy but this is difficult as you are so sensitive. It is not easy to break bonding even though women suffer intensely." (Shelat) Thus the writer advocates a different side of feminism where the women stick to their families even though they have a very strong reason to abandon them out of their sense of love and responsibility towards their fellow beings.

Himanshi Shelat's speciality as a writer is that she presents even shocking reality in a very subtle way giving only hints of the facts or situations, particularly the sentimental upheaval in the minds of her characters. So the biggest challenge while rewriting this story was to transfer the sense of the theme while keeping the style of the original author intact. The author uses many indirect hints to indicate a point and so as a translator I had to be constantly conscious of not to indulge into over-translation by providing any kind of explanation or commentary to allow the readers to decipher the hints on their own for a better reading experience. Finding suitable equivalence of some culture specific expressions along with carrying forward the essence of the Gujarati culture as reflected in the original story were other challenges faced during the process. And to deal with these challenges, I adopted what Nida calls 'Dynamic equivalence' technique which aims at "complete naturalness of expression" (Nida 129)

To conclude I can say that the entire process of translating this poignant story was very enriching experience with a deep sense of satisfaction to be able to help Gujarati literature reach out to the national and international readers through my humble efforts.

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SHELAT, HIMANSHI. 2020. Personal Interview.

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Spark

Purna had been chatting with Annu till late night, and even after she went to bed, sleep eluded her; so she felt lazy and listless the next morning. She lacked the energy to get on with the daily chores, and instinctively felt that the day was bound to be one of inertia. And to increase her irritation she heard a knock on the door. She got annoyed and thought that it must be some stupid fool to knock on the door despite the door bell! Hurriedly Purna rushed all the way from the kitchen to the living room, panting for breath. She pushed open the door, and seeing an unexpected visitor, stepped back.

Generally at this hour of the day, her neighbour Ushaben comes to pay her routine visit or someone comes to meet Annu or at the most someone or the other comes with an invitation for some function. Purna least expected the stranger who stood before her. She thought to herself, how on earth this woman entered the compound gate. She held the door as if about to shut it and stood there restlessly. She was quite clueless about what business this woman had here. Maybe she wanted to go somewhere else and was here only to ask for the address.

The woman adjusted the strap of her cheap purse; she seemed to be quite anxious to say something. She was decked up in a blue sari with *zari* border which shone brightly in the sunlight. As Purna found it inappropriate to stare at that woman's face, she bluntly and quickly inquired with downcast eyes :

"Who are you looking for?"

That woman said in Hindi:

"Does Lalsingh work here?"

She uttered Lalsingh's name in a hushed voice and held out a crushed chit to Purna who tried to read it from a distance. The chit, written in unseasoned hands contained Lalsingh's name, the name of the bungalow, the society address and a map. Everything was mentioned perfectly.

"Lalsingh has gone to his village. He is on leave," retorted Purna.

"I am aware of it." said the lady, "He was supposed to come back in one month's time but two months have already passed."

Purna answered back in an irritated tone, “What if two months have passed? I don’t know anything about the matter. You can see that he hasn’t come.”

The lady was disappointed but stood there nonetheless.

“Will he not work here anymore?”

“We will know once he comes back,” said Purna, her voice hardly hiding her irritation.

“Did he indicate when would he be back?”

“No” said Purna almost dismissively.

Purna didn’t like the fact that this woman was standing on her doorstep making such inquiries. She would definitely not like to be seen with such a woman. What explanation would she give to the inquisitive people? She was even hesitant to ask her straight away what business she had with Lalsingh, but realized that it was none of her concern. She made a gesture of closing the door. Sensing the fact that once the door got closed, it would never open again, the woman made a last desperate attempt to say whatever she had to:

“Lalsingh owes me some money.... Rs. 500....he promised to give it to me later on.”

Now Purna realized the core of the matter. The visitor was a very ordinary looking woman. And right then Purna noticed that she was sweating and her face was smeared with loose powder. She had painted her eyebrows and had applied red lipstick...and her whole appearance looked quite unnatural. Her hand again reached the strap of her purse. Her wrists were studded with many gold and silver coloured plastic bangles,

and she had worn a silver finger ring too. Purna thought to herself how it was possible that Lalsingh, who used to open the compound gate with pride in his manner, water the plants with eyes downcast, was involved with such a woman....

It may not be the reality. Perhaps the woman was lying. How people use various fraudulent tricks to extract money from others! She might be one of their types or may be someone had tricked and sent her with some ulterior motive. Even if she was telling the truth, Purna should not get involved into Lalsingh's shady deeds. She closed the door rudely telling the lady to come once Lalsingh was back. She also shut the open window without any apparent reason. And while closing the window, she caught a glimpse of the lady's back. The lady left and disappeared behind the big banana leaves of the compound. Only the reflection of her bright blue sari was visible at a distance through the window panes of her room.

While going towards the kitchen, Purna could not help to catch a glimpse of Annu's room. She was surprised to find her door ajar. Sitting on her bed, Annu was reading a magazine. The cover page had a photograph of a nude female model who had covered her bust with her hair. She thought to herself, how shameful the model looked! Guys like Yash were bound to get seduced by such women. Only yesterday her husband Suren had told her that Annu's marriage was all over, she must be prepared for divorce. The matter was serious and Yash would not compromise.

Annu was in great despair and agony as if someone had slapped her face tightly. Purna failed to understand how Yash could find Annu frigid who always used to seduce him with her intoxicating voice and unabashed manner.

Purna was now in the kitchen making *rotis* mechanically; she put them on the pan, puffed them up on the gas and arranged them on the plate one by one. Seeing the puffed up *rotis* it struck to her suddenly that perhaps the woman was pregnant. Now she felt she should have patiently listened to her. She would be in dark about the matter till Lalsingh returned.

Purna was taking a stroll in her garden while watering the plants in the garden. She realized that she had been neglecting the plants since past couple of days. The mud in the pots had dried up and the plants had become shrunken. Then she saw Ushaben coming towards her.

"You can send Annu to my house. A change of atmosphere will do her good," Ushaben suggested sympathetically.

"I'll definitely tell her," came Purna's prompt reply.

Ushaben anxiously inquired, "Any news from Yash....?"

"Nothing of the sort" interrupted Purna.

Ushaben was disappointed. She wanted to prolong the discussion.

She then handed a letter to Purna, "Oh! Take this, I had almost forgotten. The postman dropped it in my mailbox by mistake. This is a letter for Lalsingh. There is a boy called Lalu in my house, so the postman must have got confused."

Purna accepted the envelope in a gesture of surprise. Lalsingh used to get mails from home and this was from his native place only. The address on the cover was of Lalsingh's home. Purna almost forgot the presence of Ushaben while wondering where Lalsingh might have gone on the pretext of visiting his home.

Lalsingh appeared to be quite a simple man; but things were gradually becoming suspicious - half revealed, half concealed. Purna failed to come to terms with the sudden turn of events and drops of sweat appeared on her forehead. When any such unexpected events occurred, this was her usual reaction. Her pulse beat became unstable and she felt uneasy. Suren always advised her to consult a doctor at such times, as recurring health problems should not be neglected. Suren often said "I am already overloaded with work, then Annu's problem and to top it you too…"

Purna used to console him saying, "I'm fine. Is it necessary to visit a doctor frequently with such petty complaints?"

Suren always seemed to be busy with his work. She didn't have much clue, but she could sense that there was some problem in his office at the moment. There were constant phone calls and increased movement of employees, lots of discussions were going on – sometimes in raised voices, at times in hushed voices. Amidst such work pressure, Purna hardly found the opportunity to talk to her husband peacefully about Annu, leave alone Lalsingh and the strange woman who had arrived in the morning. However serious the matter was, Suren's reaction had always been the same – "We'll see, some solutions will come up, everything will be alright" etc. After such cold reactions, Purna could hardly finish her conversation.

Today Purna was determined to talk to her husband about the strange lady and her query about Lalsingh. They should always be alert about employees who worked at their household. In case things went out of hand then Suren might only tell her that she should have at least informed him.

In the morning soon after the door of Suren's study opened, Purna found him pre-occupied with files and documents but she decided to bring up the matter nonetheless. While she was talking, Suren took out his spectacles and looked at her once in a while still busy with his piles of papers. Her expectations to get some reaction from Suren were shattered as he seemed the least perturbed.

Suren finally responded, "It is the woman's fault. Such business should never be run on credit. The money should have been collected at that moment as such clients lack stability. How call girls make money instantly by demanding Rs. 1000 or 1200 without any scope of bargaining? One needs to shell out the sum instantly for such luxuries. Lalsingh turned out to be quite a formidable creature."

In a hurt tone, Purna answered back, "But how could he not pay the woman and go away? And it was so foolish of him to give our address."

"Like any other business, there is a scope of cheating here as well," uttered Suren in a matter of fact voice.

She felt the urge to say something but the words refused to come out of her mouth. Meanwhile Suren continued : "Lalsingh goes home once a year, should he observe enforced celibacy till then? Women like these run their business on clients like Lalsingh. You have only to keep your eyes open to see more. Perhaps you are expecting too much."

Purna almost stopped hearing Suren. She couldn't help ruminating into her past. Some years back she had been to Delhi for five months to nurse her sick mother. After coming back, immediately she had to go to Canada for Annu who was undergoing a treatment for depression and everybody had said

that she, being a sister-in-law, must play the role of a surrogate mother. How she hated the grey walls of Annu's apartment, yet had to put up with it and stayed there for four months. In between she had to travel to other places leaving back her husband several times. Whenever she went, Suren would always comfort her, "Relax...I'll manage." Why he never wanted to accompany her or stopped her from going? He never ever confessed to her that he would miss her even if she went for a long duration. No, Suren had never said any such thing. She moved away from Suren who had already resumed his work.

She could hardly get a wink of sleep all night and then it was almost time for her to wake up in the morning so she decided get out of bed. While brushing her teeth, she looked at her face in the mirror carefully. She splashed plenty of cold water on her face to get relief from her burning eyes. After patting her face dry, she touched her cold cheeks with her fingers. Looking at her tired eyes, she found in herself a reflection of the woman who had come for Lalsingh the previous morning.

She quickly went towards Annu's room saying, "Get up Annu....it's already seven thirty...."

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The Land

Bhoomi by Milind Bokil in Marathi
Translated by SHUBHADA DESHPANDE

Translator's Note

The original story in Marathi, *Bhoomi,* is by Milind Bokil, a renowned author in Marathi whose literary works are enriched by a unique realistic dimension that is a result of his active involvement in social work as an activist. The present story is thus an appealing account of how a Christian missionary from Germany, initially assigned the role of a teacher in a small village of Maharashtra devotes himself to a social cause and how the same determination to help the deprived section in the village leads to his expulsion thus making him realize the naked truth of being different from those whom he thought to be his own extended family across the national borders.

The translator has always found story an easy genre to be translated, possibly due to the prose narrative, as compared to poetry. However, untranslatability kept hovering around while translating *Bhoomi* from Marathi to English as the context is rich with culture-specific features such as dialectal expressions. Bassnett (1980) mentions that it is not possible to get a text exactly translated into another language as there are several factors involved like 'different cultures, societies and linguistic systems among others'.(Xavier: 1997) Though the translator belongs to the same linguistic background and can easily understand the dialectal version of the expressions in Marathi, she could understand the richness of such rustic expressions in a literary text but found it very difficult to transfer the genuine ethnic essence of the dialectal expressions. For example, the following Marathi extract from the original story

"त्ये तर काई न्हाई. दुसऱ्या दिवशी फादरनी सोता कपडे काढून इहीर खणायला सुरवात केली. आपण अजून हथरूणातनं उठत बी न्हाई तवा हातभर माती खोदली होती. लई लाजवलं फादर तुमी आमाला "

Untranslatability thus couldn't be overcome successfully and the translator had to give in and translate the dialectal expressions in Marathi into the standard English version.

According to Abdullatief (2020), omission can play as a translation strategy to resolve a translation problem. He cites Dimitriu (2004, 165) who suggests omission as a helpful strategy for translators in order to adjust the translated text 'linguistically, pragmatically, culturally or ideologically' for the audiences/ readership targeted. He further discusses omission as a translation error but finally cites Baker (2000) to conclude that it performs the role of a strategy to 'deal with non-equivalence problems.'

As the present story is set in rural India, except the protagonist and two more characters, all other characters belong to rural background. Though some might be literate, they all are deprived of education due to their social status. Some of them, naturally, speak abusive language, though apologize for it.

"बघ ए हणमंत्या, बघ," बजाबा विजयाने ओरडला "आयघाल्या, तुला मी सांगत व्हतो ते पटत नव्हतं ना?"

Untranslatability of the abusive words made the translator simply use the expression 'abusive words' instead of translating the exact words. However, the author of the original story suggested some expressions in English as the translation of these words. Thawabteh (2014) looks at borrowing as a boost to 'rapid and ubiquitous intercultural exchange'. Using loan words from the SL is thus a commonly accepted strategy in translation.

In terms of the dialectal version of Marathi in the story, the translator, in spite of being aware of the beauty of the version,

had no other option than translating the expressions into simple, more general words, as Baker (1992) mentions it as 'one of the commonly practised strategies' in translation.

"वाजंत्रीचा मोसम" was a term in rural and geographical dialect of Marathi. The translator had to use the word 'band season' to make the readers understand the concept. The underprivileged classes played the band as a part of marriage processions in order to earn additional income.

This is, as Owji (2013) mentions, the 'semantic void", inability to find semantically similar word in the TL. The dialectal version spoken by the villagers of Sawarde in the story is a specific feature of Marathi language thus making it difficult for the translator to transfer the exact layer of meaning and beauty. Venuti (1996) has mentioned language as a 'collective force, an assemblage of forms' constituting a 'semiotic regime' and discusses an interesting intertwining of the standard dialect that in fact dominates but at the same time is 'subject to constant variation from regional or group dialects..'.

The word *Harijan* (meaning the sons of God referring to the underprivileged classes of society) was kept the same way in English as the word has been added to some English dictionaries. As regards the use of loan word here in the TL, the translator agrees with Coulthard (1992) who has opined that the translator has the image of an 'ideal reader' in mind who has 'knowledge of certain facts, experiences, opinions, preferences and linguistic competence'. Coulthard further states that it is on the basis of this image that the translator takes the decisions relating to 'content, expressions, sequencing and rhetorical devices.'

Similarly, the story includes some expressions in English by the protagonist as well as other two educated characters, spelt in Devanagari script.

"आय एम टेकिंग द नाईट ट्रेन", "आय एम शुअर द सोसायटी हॅज प्लॅन्ड समथिंग फॉर यू"

The translator had nothing else to do than scripting the expressions in English.

The story is in third person narrative mentioning the protagonist as Father throughout the text. The translator has spelt the word with the initial in upper case throughout the story as she wanted to specify the difference between the words 'father' as a noun and 'Father' as a proper noun categorically referring to the priest. One can thus identify the limitations of the script, i.e., the original story being in Marathi which does not include similar noun; however, the same word signifies a noun too in the target language.

Khozan (1993), suggests that a translator is helped by the 'best approximations' to maintain the 'atmosphere' which in New Criticism refers to the emotional mood prevailed in the story. The present story includes formally reduced expressions like "In the inanimate, cold climate there." "In an unnatural quietness." as translated in English. The translator found it necessary to translate those reduced formal structures verbatim as it could transfer the exact mood of the context to the target language.

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The Land

Father had a final overview of the packed baggage. There was nothing much to be packed, in fact. Two big suitcases and a handbag. The government had given ample time to prepare. Ten days. Packing two bags within that period was not at all difficult. He had rather decided to leave behind many things. He had bought his own clothes when he came here. It would be the same while leaving.

The villagers from Sawarde had said they would be coming in the afternoon. To bid him farewell before his departure. Father had been to Sawarde some five-six days ago but all of them were not present so couldn't meet them. Those whom he could meet had yet to overcome the blow of Father's leaving the country. Then they said that they would all come and meet him in the school to say farewell.

Father stood near the window. Vacations were on. It was all quiet in the school premises. The two-storeyed, yellow school building formed a right angle with the place where he used to stay. There was an open ground in between. It had almost reached the road. Tamarind and mango trees surrounded the ground. The place that otherwise used to reverberate with children's loud chatter was now occupied by a few squirrels scurrying around on the ground.

Father then began waiting for the people. In fact, he was against any such farewell. But Sonawanes were determined. Father wouldn't have paid heed to anyone else's requests. But he was not willing to displease the people from Sawarde. All those Harijans occupied a tender space in his mind.

Finding no one approaching his house, Father turned inside. Important documents were stacked on the table. The one at the top was from the Government of India. He kept staring at that thick, brown envelope for some moments. Then he sat in the chair and opened the letter. The content was clear. Written in a civil but firm language. Crystal clear. No ambiguity! Leave the country in ten days.

Father kept the letter inside the envelope again. He was alarmed when he had received it a week ago. In fact, he was cautioned by some of his acquaintances against some such happening. It was when he was to get his visa renewed. But he had not taken it seriously. He was hopeful to get the visa renewed as usual. But instead, he received this letter asking him to leave the country within ten days.

Father sighed keeping the letter aside. He was not at all willing to leave. He had not applied for citizenship but had never even imagined of being forced to leave this country some time. It was almost twenty years since he had arrived here from Germany. He had spent the initial fourteen years in the seminary. He used to teach the students learning the religion there. But he was weary of that dull routine. The seminary was situated in a big city. After some time, he developed a feeling of being inactive. All days used to be stereotyped. A strange stagnancy had made his life monotonous. A life- closed, lonely and ascetic. He then came to the school here. A district place that could neither be exactly called a city nor a village.

In the beginning, he liked the work in school. He used to speak broken Marathi initially but improved it as he stayed there and

started speaking it clearly. The school had a hostel connected to it. The Mission had its hospital at some distance. Taking stalk of the functioning of the school for around three to four years, he widened its scope. The number of children in the boarding increased too. He started realizing the true meaning of the term 'rural' as he got acquainted with those children. He used to advise the children to be regular in school and to scold those who were irregular. He used to ask for an explanation from the parents in case of those with poor academic progress. But when he started visiting the children's homes for this reason, he got to know that the main problems were different. Those were really the problems associated with poverty and misery. First of all, those issues needed to be addressed to make an improvement. Superficial solutions could be of no use.

He lost his attention in the school after he realized this. He started wandering around that whole region then. Sometimes on the bicycle or he even used to walk sometimes. Used to meet people. See their lands. See the crops. Used to observe their hordes migrating to faraway places for harvesting sugarcane every year. He realized that the whole region depended on the whims of monsoon. And the rains were unpredictable and. sporadic. Always less than required. Most of the land was rainfed and therefore always drought affected. They used to sow the seeds whenever possible after the first monsoon and then kept waiting for the rains. They could harvest something only if it rained. Many times, it turned out to be only fodder. If it didn't rain, they would lock the houses and wander around in search of work. When Father realized the importance of water for farming, he started helping them in digging wells. Many a time, he used to arrange for the loans from the banks for them. Sometimes, from the funds of the institute. Initially he used to help individual farmers and then

groups. Then he began selecting the most deprived ones to help.

He was not able to understand exactly what was wrong with his work that made him suspect in the eyes of the government. He could understand that his way of work was hurting the interests of some other leaders and the big shots in the villages. The place like Sawarde had developed into an almost warlike situation. Anantrao from there was a big leader and was not happy with what Father was doing. People like him used to defame him so that he would leave the place. And they used their usual technique to defame him. But it was all false as one could judge. All crystal clear….and yet the government had taken this decision! Father was very disturbed and shocked to the core by all this.

He tried to get the decision cancelled. He requested some known influential people to work in his favour. He sent a telegram to the Archbishop too. But he was told that nothing could be done in such situations. There was very little time. He was very disappointed to know about it. Didn't even come out of his room for two days. He had been passionate about his work. Had made new plans. It all disappeared in just one moment.

He then started packing up all his belongings. Visited as many villages and met as many people as possible. He wrote letters to those whom he couldn't meet. The bus was scheduled for night. People from Sawarde had yet to come. It would all be over once they came and left.

He got up to see as he heard sound of people talking to each other in the premises. But it was the school gardener talking to some labourers. Talking amongst themselves, those people went away and again there was silence in the premises. Father looked at his watch. It was too early for Sonawane and people to come. Once they left, he would meet the bishop in the

evening. Father had received a message that he was staying in the mission hospital.

Father had a look around the room. The things in the wooden shelf on the wall had yet to be taken care of. Most of those things would be left behind. Father opened the closed shelf. Many books were there which he had planned to donate to the school. An atlas, that too was to be donated. Pens, pencils and many such trivial things were there. There was a non-functioning watch. Bottles of medicine. Some files. Old albums of photographs and a pile of his personal letters below the album.

Father lightly picked up the pile of letters. All those were the letters from his brother- Hans. The last letter was dated six years back. He had been in a sanatorium for almost sixteen years after the war, suffering from asthma. No one else from Father's family had survived. Hans was the last. He had passed away in the same sanatorium six years ago. Since then, he had stopped getting letters. This pile of letters was pushed to the rear side somewhere.

Father dusted those letters and sat in the chair with those letters. Those were all from his brother Hans. All letters were in a specific type of envelope. The content inside was mostly the same. Hans' health used to have changes like the weather. The letters mostly talked about his health. Followed by trivial complaints. Stereotypical activities in the sanatorium. Anyone could tell the content without opening any of the letters. Father used to write letters to him regularly. Used to inform him about the happenings in India. He had tried to fill up the vacuum in his brother's lonely life. Used to wait for his letter. Six years ago, that link was broken.

Father removed one of the letters from the pile and started reading. After the description of his disease, Hans had revived old memories. He could not join the war due to his ill health.

He used to work in the post office far away from home. Father had joined the army. Everything was destroyed by the time war came to an end. His sister and father passed away in the last bomb attack. Mother was left behind all alone. She lost her mental balance when the enemy forces intruded. Father was held captive as a prisoner of war. Hans was absconding. She committed suicide by jumping off the third floor. Hans had recollected it all. Their childhood before the war, their village, school, sister, parents. Other friends and relatives and everything in their earlier life.

Though it all had happened a long ago, Father experienced a deep surge of emotions in the heart. Hans was tall with a smiling face. But the asthma had wiped off that smile. Father had visited him once but he was beyond recognition. With a grown beard. Ribs were moving. Younger to Father, he was looking many years older. He was panting. Not able to speak anything. When Father met him, he sat there holding Father's hand in his own for a long time.

But at least he was alive for many years. Daddy and Ana had died before anyone could gather wits. Father remembered; it was mandatory to join the army. One could smell the war in the air, He had joined when the war began. France, Austria, Russia. Initially, everywhere they were all frenzied by the victory and later ridiculed by the whole world. Disdain for being a prisoner. Coming home he could see nothing but heaps of debris and ashes.

Father remembered: He couldn't meet his parents and the sister but he could at least know what had happened to them. But he never came to know what happened to Norma. She was there when Father had returned home a couple of times during the war. She had taken up a nurse's job. But she could not be traced after he went to Russia. Since then, he could never see again the tall, slim figure with silky golden hair that she

possessed. No one could tell him anything about it. He tried hard to search for her whenever possible but his efforts were in vain. He then consoled himself that she must have lost her life in war somewhere. But the qualm remained forever.

Father thought to himself……. had there been no war, perhaps the things would have happened differently. That doesn't mean I had not become a priest because that was decided long back. But the loneliness resulting from the loss of the whole family wouldn't have been my fate. There would be Hans, Ana, their children. Other friends would be there. Norma would be there too. Even far from the land, there would be a supportive feeling of having one's own people. There would be a weak string of Norma's love. But the war that took place, took the vitality and vigour out from life drying it to the extent of being desolate. The youth is all a waste, full of ugly features and scratches. Neither could I realize how the hands got hold of the gun nor am I aware of how I started using it. Went on killing everyone in front of me. I enjoyed riding tanks in their devastated villages as and when we won and was lashed by the same people when imprisoned. When I returned, the hands were full of blood and the mind was full of willingness to become a priest, realization of a new sin and a helplessness of having lost everything and everyone.

Father thought it was better that he came to India. Life was channelized into a new direction. There was so much to be done here. And it could give satisfaction too. After Hans passed away, there was no one left in the family. Life was devoted to the church. He was happy with the thought of continuing his work in India. Till the body lost its strength. But now that is also not possible.

With his eyes closed, he quietly leaned back in the chair.

Hearing the noise of people in the premises, he got up and came to the window. It was Sonawanes. With loud chats, they

approached his house. Ten-twelve of them. Jagnya, Kundlik and Mukinda were also there. Father waved his hand from the window and indicated the way towards his room. He opened the door and stood there. All of them suddenly stopped talking as they were close to his house.

“Come, friends,” Father said, “Come in”.

Removing the footwear near the door, all of them came in. All were quiet as they entered. Jagnya, Kundlik and a couple of others were regular visitors. Others hesitated a little to sit and kept observing the pictures on the wall.

“Is the dog tied?” asked Jagnya. “It would be difficult for us otherwise.”

“Yes. He is tied throughout the day. So, nothing to worry during the day.”

“Is there a dog here?” one of them asked.

“Yes… a big dog it is,” said Jagnya.

“It was not letting us step inside the gate when we had first visited Father. We had to call him from outside.”

“Please sit down, friends. Why are you standing?” said Father.

“Yes, we will,” replied Bajaba, “we were looking at the pictures on the wall. Father, is it from your country?”

“Yes, from Germany.”

“Would you be going there, now?”

“Yes. To Germany,” replied Father, “Where else to go?”

“It must be very far, must be an air travel, if I am not wrong! How long does it take?”

“ummmm…. takes one whole day,” Father replied thoughtfully, “till I reach home.”

"Oh…. really! Still better as you would take a flight. How long should it take by train if one plans to?" asked Bajaba.

"Long time. But there is no railway available."

"It should be. Don't you think? What if anyone wishes to travel by train?"

"Keep quiet. Don't try to be over smart." Someone among them interrupted him and said, "Be the Prime Minister and then bring whatever improvements you like. How childish to say there should be railways!"

All of them laughed. Father occupied his seat after they all sat. Initially, Jagnya and Kundlik were standing but as there was no space left anywhere, they sat on the bed beside Father. It was silence for some time. Some of them began gulping water from the jug kept on the stool.

"I remember the day when you first visited us," said Kundlik. "Father from Kardile brought you here. He was saying we should dig a well to make provision for our drinking water. But you insisted on irrigating agriculture. That Father was not ready to accept your proposal. Do you remember? What a long discussion it was!"

Father smiled. He remembered. The parish priest had been unable to apprehend this subject. He was of the opinion that Sonawanes being Harijans, were prohibited to get water from the village well so a new well should be dug up. I was exasperated at the sight of what Sonawanes were facing. It was a colony on the outskirts of the village. Their houses were similar to those of the nomads. The roofs covered with wedges. No separate drainage system. Dogs resting therein. Half-clad children wandering bare feet. Many of them used to work as labourers in others' farms. They used to toil hard day and night except for some hours of sleep. Accompanied by

families. Their own lands were rainfed. Unable to grow any greens.

Father could recollect… while scouting a place for the well, he had realized that though dry, their lands were beside a brook. It could have good water levels below. He had dreamt of improving their farming with the help of a pump and pipeline thus irrigating their whole land. To make them independent and to save their hardships of running around in search of labour. Mere provision for drinking water, as he had rightly thought, was not going to be the solution to their problem.

"It was really helpful to get the land irrigated, wasn't it?" asked Father. "Water has changed your life."

"Yes, Father, you're absolutely correct," Sukdev, the oldest among them, replied, "We are grateful to you. I still remember our plight. Five years back, we used to toil hard and do all petty jobs begging for our daily bread in return. We used to be chased by dogs while asking for bread. Small children used to throw stones. What an inhuman life it was! As if we were living for the sake of living and there was no other motive at all!"

Everyone fell silent. They all fixed their vision to the ground. Avoiding each other's faces. Jagnya cleared his throat and said, "I still remember the time when you had scolded us." Everyone was curious to hear as he reset himself sitting comfortably on the bed and continued, "You initiated the work of digging the well but we did not contribute anything. Father, it made you angry."

"True," said Bajaba. "But it was band season. It is the time when we can earn something. It really helps, doesn't it?"

"I remember it, too," said Kundlik. "Father convened a meeting and told us that the well belonged to us. We would need to work laboriously. No one else could help us."

"That was not enough. The next day Father took off his white clothes and started digging the well. We woke up to see that he had dug up almost a hand deep. Father, you made us feel ashamed of ourselves."

Father smiled affectionately. But he remembered how he had lost his temper then. He was baffled to see their ignorance and carelessness. According to him, digging the well was in fact an issue at the heart of their life. But these people were happy with the petty, wrong jobs that could not give them any dignity either….in spite of being aware that it is socially not acceptable? How could they accept the job only for the sake of some drops of liquor? He had sounded very rude and stern then. He had called them 'silly' and 'stupid'. They were trying to convince that those two months was the only period to earn something meaningful. But he had not heeded to their pleas. He had stayed there overnight and couldn't sleep the whole night. He had then decided to start digging the well himself. And had started before anyone else had got up.

"I remember it too," Hanmanta, the bearded man said, "I went to the plain in the morning and to my great surprise, Father was digging it all alone. Bare clothed. Body sweating profusely and dropping it on the ground."

"Yes, yes," Sukdev said, waving head, "Father, you have sweated for us. You left no stone unturned for us."

"Now let us keep that topic aside. Did you get the chilly saplings?" Father interrupted him.

"Yes, Father," said Jagnya. "We got it in the neighbouring village. We finished planting the saplings and came here."

"Good we are on this topic now," said Bajaba, "Father, could you please help me with my doubt? Are we supposed to spray half a dose of fertilizer on the chilly one month after planting it or not?"

"You are correct," Father said. "First half before plantation and the remaining to be spread after a month."

"Listen to what he says, Hanmantya," Bajaba said loudly in a triumphant voice. "You swine! You didn't agree when I told you the same."

"Bajaba, behave your tongue," Jagnya interrupted him, "Try to mind where you're!"

"Pardon me, Father," said Bajaba, slapping himself, "I know it's a bad habit but this Hanmantya was acting smart."

"But Father," intervened Kundlik, "co-operative societies do not approve loan for vegetable farming. It would have really helped if they gave it. We need to spend from our own pocket to buy a bag of fertilizers."

Father kept quiet. He thought Sonavanes had lied to him in this regard though he never expressed it to them. He remembered the day when the water lifting had started and the topic of fertilizers and seeds was discussed. He had offered the seed of groundnut and asked them to get the fertilizers from the credit society. They all had said, "Society belongs to all big shots. No one is going to entertain us there. So better you provide us with everything." Father had trusted in what they said and had given them everything. Later he met the secretary of the society coincidentally who revealed that a loan was given to all of them. He offered to show the ledgers as proof and mentioned that it was time by then to collect the dues. Father didn't try to verify it with them but was restless for some of the days after that incident. He was annoyed by this kind of ingratitude towards someone extending a helping hand. He was aware of the poverty and the deprivation causing helplessness. But it was very difficult for him to digest the fact that they lied to him.

Father remembered how disappointed he had been after that incident. As if he had lost faith in humankind. He had a strong feeling of not doing any favour to anyone. But time made him realize how it was exactly what people called experience and life. He understood the importance of being tolerant towards all such kinds of people. Initially, he had decided not to give them the seed of wheat but this realization made him considerate of them and he had changed his decision.

Mukinda was sitting quietly in a corner as others were talking. His head was down for a long time. He was busy removing the tassels from the mattress by one hand and with the other one on his cheek. Father happened to look at him.

"Hey, Mukinda, what happened? Why are you quiet?" he asked.

Mukinda felt ashamed as he laughed and looked down deeper. He was around forty years of age but his lean body structure made him look younger. He scratched the beard and started playing with the mattress again.

"Hope you don't drink now, do you?" asked Father.

Mukinda shook head looking down. "I don't drink now," he said. "Kicked the habit."

"How is Anyaba?"

"He was supposed to join us, Father," said Bajaba before Mukinda could say anything, "but there was a death in his relation. So, he got stuck there."

"Has he stopped drinking or not?" asked Father.

"He says he has stopped but not completely," told Jagnya. "He gets a kick at times."

"In fact, our Anyaba is very clever," said Kundlik. "He has stayed in Mumbai. He thinks very smartly. But this habit of

drinking has spoilt him. Additionally, the village is full of such hooligans. They make him dance on their tunes. A mere quarter of liquor can rob him of everything. Except this, he is an excellent man one could find on the earth."

Father could visualize the short and fat figure of Anyaba. His face often looked growling. Eyes often reddened and a constant stink of liquor around his body. He wondered how men display a variety of dispositions. Had Anyaba utilized his wisdom for his clan, Sonawanes would have benefited a lot. But he lacked that understanding. There were two parties in the village and people from both the parties used Anyaba to fight against each other. A bottle of liquor could make him stand in front of anyone's house and hurl abuses on him. At times, it could even lead him to fights. Mukinda was his associate.

Father remembered. Anyaba had started complaining when they decided to lift the water. The rest of the villagers were against the Harijans. They instigated Anyaba. Initially they said, "You will not get the land beside the brook." So, Father managed to get permission from the higher authorities. Then they wanted to be a part of the scheme. But that too was strongly rejected by Father. So they provoked Anyaba and started troubling. Mukinda and Anyaba used to drink and attend and disrupt the meetings whatever way they wished. Once he had hit Jagnya in the head with a mattock.

Father recalled the whole long history. A history full of maddening quarrels and skirmishes. In spite of being poor and exploited by the landlords, Sonawanes were not organized and united. Even after consistent mediation, they used to fight and quarrel among themselves. This used to be at its peak especially at the time of distribution of water. Everyone used to break the bunds and channelize the water to their own land as soon as it overflowed. It was beyond their understanding that the water belonged to all of them and that an equal

distribution was the only way to sustain the lift scheme. Father used to spend most of his time explaining to them this simple logic.

But this was not the only problem. Anantrao in the village was another trouble... He was the Chairman of the Zilla Parishad and his land was adjacent to their land. He owned the whole village. No one in the village disobeyed him. As Sonavanes got good water levels below the land beside the brook, he also started digging a well there. At a distance of merely fifteen feet and beside the brook. He deliberately signed a contract for this work with Anyaba and some of the Sonawanes started working there as labourers too.

Father's anger had known no bounds when he came to know about it. It was beyond his capacity to understand the ignorance and foolishness of Sonawanes. He was aware of Anantrao being a troubling hurdle but couldn't understand why Sonawanes were digging their own grave by digging that well. He approached the well shouting at the people. At the same time, coincidentally, Anyaba came there with some other labourers. Father called him close and asked, "What kind of drama is going on here?" He replied arrogantly, "Which drama? I am digging the well." Father had slapped him very hard for this.

"We were not in our senses at that time," said Hanmantya, scratching his head. "We used to behave madly."

"Why madness?" said Jagnya. "You didn't realize whom to treat dearly and who was your enemy. I was not there in the village at the time else would have told you better."

"But we were helpless!" said Bajaba. "Anantrao managed to get the ownership of brookside land. There was proof. Who can challenge the records?"

“Record was brought later,” said Jagnya. “Better you don’t mention the records. He did not own land there originally.”

“He might not. But my dear friend, he managed to get it done on paper. Didn’t he? Wasn’t his name written on the paper? Father, what do you feel?”

Father merely nodded head. He had openly started a mission against Anantrao with the help of Sonawanes. He sent letters to Tehsildar, Deputy Collector and also to the minister. He also got it published in the newspapers. But legally they were unable to restrict Anantrao from digging a well there. Additionally, he enjoyed a good social status. People used to get scared of his reputation. He arranged to get all the documents from the Tehsil office proving his ownership on the land.

Father remembered all those days. He was a lone warrior fighting there. But there was no chance of any authority taking note of it. Anantrao was so dominating that Sonawanes were scared to attend the meetings too. In addition to this, he started spreading a word against Father and continued digging the well.

“But collector sir was good, wasn’t he?” said Hanmantya. “He was quite understanding.”

“Certainly. He was a great man. He used to speak our language, though broken. The way he crossed Anantrao was really amazing.”

“But how could he alone do anything?” said Bajaba. “All other bastards were there to interrupt.”

Someone shooed Bajaba again. Realizing his own mistake, he shut up. The collector was really a good person. Father remembered how finally he had approached the collector as no one else was responding to him. Initially, he had doubted

Father's intention. But once listened to the whole story and said, "I am supposed to visit that area. I will personally go and enquire."

Unfortunately, Father had to leave for Retreat at the same time. He felt that it was his mistake. He should have postponed the dates and should have remained present when the collector had visited Sawarde. When he visited, he saw exactly the opposite of what father had told him. Anantrao was present. Sonawanes admitted in front of the collector that they had no trouble in Anantrao digging the well. They registered no objection. They gave a written statement. Waiving the statement before Father's face, the collector said, "See…..what you told was so different from what your people said."

Father remembered his own helplessness at that time. Hearing him, Father sat helplessly in the collector's office for some time. As he was unable to articulate any words. The collector broke the silence after some time as he suggested that people must have been scared and prompted to say so. They were scared of Anantrao. One could clearly infer the weakness of Sonawanes. Anantrao had taken an undue advantage of Father's absence there and had forced them all to write it.

Recalling that incident, Father said to the people, "You should not have given that written statement. It aggravated the issue further. A little more strength and resoluteness would have resolved the whole problem. Not only did you all let me down but also incurred a big loss for yourselves."

They all looked down again. There was complete silence for some time. Sukdev cleaned his throat, kept the turban on his lap and said in a little stretched voice, "How to tell you, Father? It is not so easy to speak out everything. One day prior to the collector's visit, Anantrao and his men visited all our houses. Warning us. He told us that in case we had said anything against him, he would end our lives in a brutal way.

Would parade our women naked on the streets... Would destroy everything. How were we supposed to face him in such a terror-stricken situation? Ours was a habitation of merely fifteen to twenty houses. You were not here, either. It was beyond our capacity."

Father was silent on this explanation. Suddenly, the room filled with a strange seriousness. Sukdev wore the turban again on his head. He wiped the eyelids with his dhoti.

"Father, we didn't lie happily." He continued. "But nothing is more valuable than one's life."

"Let's leave that topic aside," Father said. "There is no meaning in repeating what has happened earlier. Jagnya, please go in and ask to make some tea. Count the number of people." He asked them to leave the topic aside but it was difficult for him to drop it completely from mind. Hearing what the collector had told him, he had asked for the collector's suggestion, "What is the remedy to it, now?"

He had replied, "You can approach the court and get the work stayed. But that will be time consuming. Complaining to our department would not be worth either. Digging their own well deeper than Anantrao's may help Harijans in getting more water."

Father had not liked that reply but he later realized how this suggestion could prove a remedy for the problem. Then he started deepening Sonawanes' well. Initially he employed some workers. As a result, Anantrao started digging his well more forcefully. Father called an engineer friend. He said, "Boring would be better than digging. With three to four bores, you will certainly get water below."

Father was about to recall that engineer when Kundlik said, "It was that engineer who taught Anantrao a true lesson, didn't he?"

“Undoubtedly!’ said Bajaba enthusiastically, “He was a Brahmin, wasn’t he? That engineer? Initially when he had visited our colony, he was holding a handkerchief on his nose. He had carried his own water bottle. But when Father showed him the problematic site of the well…. he got so charged! I have no words to explain.”

“Do you remember what he had said to Jagnya? He had said that he would bring the Ganga to our doors and that he was not at all less powerful than Anantrao. He proved his words by doing what he had said.”

“Oh…. yes…. It was like a war being fought. We were far scared. It was really beyond our understanding to predict anything.”

“Seriously!” Bajaba said, thumping on the lap, “Everywhere it was like the sound of gunshots. Anantrao dug one foot below and the engineer two feet. He simply defeated Anantrao.”

Father simply kept listening to them. Anantrao had also started the bore work on the same day. Two giant yellow trucks were standing in front of each other. The place was crowded by many people. People from other villages had come to watch the whole show. The engineer had asked Father when he broke the coconut as a holy sign to begin the work, “How many feet should it be down?”

He had said, “I don’t care even if it reaches the bottom of the Earth. I need water. That’s it.”

Realizing the gravity of his intention, the engineer had started working hard. Both the machines were drilling the land forcefully. People were shouting. The whole neighbourhood was full of black smoke. The babel there was making it impossible to know who was saying what. Men on both sides were abusing each other. Spitting consistently. The site resembled a warfront.

The war continued throughout the day and the afternoon sun heated people's temper even more. Father kept thinking of stopping it somewhere and being satisfied with whatever water they could get. Anyways, nobody owned the brook water. Their stoppage would have made Anantrao stop too. Else it would continue endlessly.

But in reality, he could not stop it. He visualized those days before forty years……indiscriminate firing from the machine guns. The unbearable throbbing of the tanks. Yelling of children and women. Buildings collapsing like a pack of cards. Father kept on telling himself that the war was inevitable. One cannot run away from it. He didn't know the reason for which he had participated in the World War. But he was aware of the reason behind this war now. It was inevitable... He had warned himself, "You had run away that time. Don't repeat it this time!"

No one could understand what the engineer had done that time. But it was only Sonawanes' well that got jets of water shooting off. It became difficult to work there. Anantrao's well was dry. It was only powdered stones and sand coming up from the well. He continued digging the well furiously but couldn't get water below. Helplessly he stamped feet and left from there. Sonawanes danced happily. The engineer laughed out loudly and said, "See, I have brought the Ganga, haven't I? Tell the man with the cap that he is capable only of wrestling. He won't be able to know that we have bored horizontally, will he? Enjoy, here you have ample water, as much as you want!"

People kept recalling the old memories and Father was sitting among them with a gentle smile. The event had a wide publicity. All the newspapers in the district had published the news. People savoured the discussions regarding the struggle for water and Anantrao's retreat. Everywhere people had Father's name on their lips. But that publicity had an adverse

impact. Anantrao got provoked very badly. He decided to drive out Father from there and started spreading bad rumours. He could use his influence at the higher level. He lodged complaints there.

“Father,” Bajaba brought him back from the world of memories asking, “Is it true that the government has asked you to leave the country?”

“Yes, it is true,” said Father with a smile on face. “Your government has asked me to leave the country. They had a fear that I might convert you.”

“Seriously feel like abusing the government,” said Bajaba angrily. “Why didn’t that government ask us? We would have rightly said that our Father has not done any such thing.”

“I am of the same opinion,” Jagnya volunteered, “Can’t we do anything? We will send a petition signed by all.”

“It is of no use now, Jagnya,” said Father with his hand on Jagnya’s back, “I have an evening flight the day after tomorrow.”

“Damn it!” said Jagnya. “You did so much for us. Shouldn’t we be able to do anything for you?”

“Seriously! It was all due to your noble efforts that we could get water. I really don’t understand how we are going to repay the kindness and benevolence you have shown to us.”

“Please don’t feel so.” Father interrupted them. “Run the scheme well. That will be a true reward for me. Distribute the water fairly. Don't quarrel with each other. That way you will progress. Oh, that reminds me of something. I have got a spray pump for you as a gift. You can use it to spray pesticides. It is there in that corner. Please get it here.”

Father picked up that pump and showed it to all. He removed the pipe and showed them how to fill it with the pesticide. He also showed them the way it was to be filled with diesel. People were excited.

“This is fantastic, really.” said Kundlik. “Now there is no need to beg in front of anyone for this. We can get the pesticide, fill in this pump and spray.”

“Father,” said Jagnya, “We have got a gift for you too. As you are leaving. Can someone please get those things here?”

Jagnya made Father sit in the middle of the bed and garlanded him. Applied holy red powder on his forehead. He also draped his back with a purple shawl as a symbol of honour on behalf of all.

He said, “Kindly accept this shawl as a token of love from all of us in the colony. You protected us with a unique deed, what can we do for you? So, we have brought this shawl.” “Yes, please accept this small token from us.”

Father was deeply moved. He had a sudden lump in his throat. He was speechless for some time. With the shawl on his back, he got up and said in a voice full of emotions, “I am very thankful to you all, friends. Please don’t be under the impression that I have obliged you. Everything belongs to Him. Who am I to give? It was because you contributed efforts and broke the stones that you got the water. It all belonged to you. I just happened to be a contributor. I am thankful to you for the opportunity you all provided me to work with you and for the love you doted on me. Please forgive me for any mistakes or if at all I have said anything wrong during all these years. I would pray for your progress and happiness forever.”

There was complete silence then. Some snacks were served with a cup of tea. Everyone finished it and sat quietly. The world outside was silent. The gloom spread across all of them.

“Shall we take your leave, now?” asked Jagnya awkwardly. “Keep us in your memories. Don't forget us. The whole credit of our prosperity goes to you.”

“We would like to leave Father,” said Bajaba and he touched his feet.

Hanmantya and Kundlik bowed on his feet too. Sukdev bid goodbye with his shaky hands. One by one, all left the room.

Father came out and stood there on the veranda. Walking slowly on the ground, Sonawanes reached the gate. They were repeatedly looking back. Their hands were being waved frequently.

“See you, Father,” he could hear a low voice from a distance. Father waved a hand. Shortly, all turned on to the road and disappeared. Father stood looking at the road for a long time with his hand in the same position even after they disappeared.

The mission hospital building was beside the road. The church stood behind it. High with a triangular roof. The church had a fresh green lawn maintained in front of it. The bishop was sitting in a chair below a tree. He stood up as Father went to him and greeted him. Holding Father’s hand, he helped him sit in a chair near his own.

“I am taking the night train,” said Father after some time, “I have come to say goodbye to you.”

Bishop nodded his head gently and smiled. He was dark in complexion. His face had old marks of measles. He had a bald head. Wore glasses with a golden frame. Though aged, his skin had a glow. His physique was somewhat broad. He wore a white gown and the cross in his silver chain kept moving on his chest. His face would look rude and strict. Hearing Father, he gently said, “How would you be going?”

“From Delhi,” said Father. “I have some formalities to complete. The flight is scheduled for the day after tomorrow.”

Bishop smiled and nodded head. Both of his hands rested on his lap and the fingers intertwined each other.

“I am sure the Society has planned something for you,” he said, “I mean, for the future.”

“I hope so,” replied Father. “As of now, I will go to Germany. Will know about it once I reach there.”

“Yes, they may ask you to work in a seminary perhaps.”

“Possible,” said Father. “But I don’t know anything.”

He said this but he was aware that he would need to stay in a seminary somewhere in Germany. He had devoted his whole life to the church. He was in sound health. But it was not possible for him now to visit any new country. Now he was destined to stay in a seminary far away in the jungle. In an inanimate, cold climate there. In an unnatural quietness. Reading the same books again and again. Explaining its meaning to himself. Spending a lonely, empty life separated from the world. The rest of the world would keep enjoying its own pace of life. Running factories. Emitting vehicular smoke. Building high rises. Laughing sportively. No one would need him there. Certainly, they would not spare time for him. He would continue the boredom of preaching in front of some old folks. And leading the lonely life the remaining days. He was not willing to live such a life. He wanted fresh and open air like this. With people around everywhere. He would not mind a mountainous pile of problems. He wanted work. Plenty of work. The work that was necessary.

But he did not say anything. He knew that the bishop wouldn’t understand even if he explained. He sat looking at the church behind.

"We feel sorry for the decision by the Government of India." Bishop said after some time. "We feel sorry to lose you. But you are not a citizen of this country. So, nothing can be done. We are bound to follow the rules laid down by the government."

"Yes. It would have helped to be a citizen of this country." said Father. "I feel the same. But at that time, I had an impression that it wouldn't make any difference. We are concerned with service."

"You are right." said Bishop. "We are concerned with service. Whether here or anywhere else. We want to serve humanity. The nation does not matter."

"But I used to like this country," said Father, looking around. "The earth, wind and water here. The people of this land. I had decided to spend my whole life here."

Bishop responded with a gentle smile to this. He removed his hands from the lap and folded them. "One should love mankind," he said. "The national boundaries carry no meaning. One should consider people at all places to be one's own people."

Father did not respond. A kite was moving slowly around the tower of the church at the back. It had attracted his attention for a long time. He continued staring there. It was flying against the clear blue sky. There was a crystalline statue of Mary with a baby on the church tower. Beside it was a bright brass bell in a niche formed with bricks. The whole building of the church was covered with yellow twilight.

"I don't understand why the government should do it." he said to himself. "What exactly have I done that caused them to ask me to leave?"

Bishop simply kept listening to him. He did not reply.

“I worked for the poor here. What was wrong with it?”

“You should have run the school,” said Bishop.

“No, I don’t think so.” Father shook his head restlessly and said “The problems of this society are not going to be resolved merely by education. I told the inspection committee the same thing. It won’t help by making the children study and teaching them prayers. First of all, the poverty here should be eradicated. Else nothing is going to be possible. The committee didn’t accept it.”

“No. I don’t mean so.” said Bishop. “Our job is to serve. Our job is to wipe off the tears from the faces that are full of it. We are here to guide those who have lost their path.”

“What else did I do then?” Father said irritably. “I gave water to those who didn’t have it. Food to those who were hungry. Extended a helping hand to those who had fallen in the pit. How exactly was it different from what I did?”

“There were law and order problems,” Bishop said seriously.

“But it was wrong propaganda.” Father leaned ahead as he said restively, “By those who don’t like the betterment of the poor. This country is fated to experience it always. Those people will always oppose. The landlords with vested interests. Mere service delivery won't work. Why don't they understand this?”

He went on expressing his mind and then realized that he was in front of the bishop and his voice was at a high pitch. He saw that Bishop was looking at him steadily.

“I am sorry,” said Father. “I spoke more than required. Forgive me please.”

Bishop raised his hand, “Steady,” he said, “Steady yourself!”

The sun was on its descent lengthening the shadows of trees. Father kept his hands on the chair and covered his face with

palms. Bishop kept himself stunned for some time and then stood up minding his gown. He walked closer to Father and touched him on his back. “Come, I will pray for you,” he said. “Let us go to the Lord. The prayer will help you.”

Father got up with a heavy heart and entered the church slowly.

He reached the airport long before the scheduled time of the flight. But he checked in and sent the luggage in as it would be an unnecessary carriage for him. While he was before the counter, a tall and stout person with trimmed hair approached him. Father looked at him questioningly.

“Karhadkar,” he introduced himself. “I am from the Home Ministry.” Saying so, he produced his identity card.

Father smiled at him.

“It seems you are here to verify whether I am really leaving or not.” He said.

“No. Not exactly,” Karhadkar said politely, “But you need to sign some documents.”

“Hasn’t it been over yet? I spent my whole today in signing papers.”

“I am sorry, sir. But some documents need to be signed at the time of leaving. Let’s sit there, please.”

Father filled up the forms required by him. He had to sign some three-four papers. When he finished it, Karhadkar said, “Can we have a cup of coffee, if you don’t mind? You still have enough time before the departure.”

“Fine, let’s go,” said Father. “Let me enjoy the last bit of Indian hospitality.”

The restaurant was on the first floor. It had a glass wall on one side. Karhadkar selected chairs near those glasses. The

widespread open tarmac of the airport was visible from there. The long spread of the runway narrowed down and disappeared at a faraway distance. The airport was otherwise a huge ground except the tarmac. Patches of red, dusty sand were visible. With some bushes grown here and there. It was fenced by a white concrete wall and beyond that was a similar ground full of green bushes. A thin white strand of buildings on the distant horizon. A plane had just taken off somewhere and was flying higher like an arrow.

Karhadkar did not say anything as they sat across the table. He ordered coffee. Father was looking outside. They faced each other as Father looked inside.

“Hope you won’t need any more signatures once I reach there.” He asked.

“No, certainly not.” said Karhadkar. “Please do not misunderstand us. But the immigration rules are quite troublesome these days. It is not that I came because something was missing. I belong to the same district where you worked. I was dealing with your case. I had heard a lot about you. That’s why I came...”

“What did you hear?” asked Father. “If you have believed in hearsay, you would be wrong.”

“I didn’t mean so. Regarding your work. Ours is a drought-prone district. So, the work you did was certainly necessary. It was quite valuable.”

“If that is the case, why is your government asking me to leave the country?”

“Well, let me put it properly,” Karhadkar took some time to speak and said, rubbing a hand over another, “The State is a huge machinery. It doesn’t have a nose, ears, or eyes like a human being. It looks alive because it moves. But one part is

not associated with another. We have a proverb in Marathi which means innocents have to bear the heat along with the culprits. The same is true with the government."

"I didn't get you."

"I mean to say that the government has a general policy regarding the foreign missionaries. It is not implemented discriminately. People implementing the policy are different from those who make it. We work as per the rules. On the basis of whatever orders are issued from the higher authorities."

"But I have not done anything which could scare the government." said Father. "I haven't uttered a single word relating to religion while working with people throughout my entire stay here. Forget others, not even in front of people belonging to my religion. I haven't even been to church on many Sundays."

"No. That is not the case." Karhadkar placed the cup of coffee brought by the waiter before him and said, "Please, here's the coffee."

"The leaders who didn't like my work spread such words against me. It was not true. I have been trying hard to advocate my case to everyone. The government should have verified the facts. A person like you could have been deputed on such a mission. In fact, the work done by me was the responsibility of the government. Isn't it the responsibility of your government to help the Harijans? I actually eased the burden the government otherwise had to carry. And still the government asks me to leave the country? Strange!"

Karhadkar kept stirring the coffee with his head down. He didn't say anything. Father stared at him for some time and then started looking outside again. Evening was casting its spell. The glass walls made the outside picturesque. A giant

plane had just landed and rested on the runway spreading its wings.

Karhadkar finished his coffee. He wiped his lips with a handkerchief. He waited for Father to keep the cup down for some time and then said with a clear look at Father,

"I will answer your question. Actually, I am not supposed to disclose it to you, but you're leaving this country now and you will carry this misunderstanding forever if I don't tell you this. So, I will tell you."

He was quiet for some time. As usual, he rubbed his hands against each other. Father was curious to hear him. Karhadkar continued,

"It is true that the government has a policy towards foreign missionaries which is not in favour of you. But we take the decisions only after verifying the facts. We were aware that the reports against you were submitted by the leaders who had their vested interests. We knew that. The government has not taken this decision merely on the basis of those reports. I think your work was examined by your own church. A sort of…."

"Internal evaluation," said Father.

"Correct. So, it was a committee. We had the report submitted by that committee. Before finalizing our decision, we asked for the committee's opinion about you and…. they…"

"What about them?" asked Father.

"They gave an undertaking which said, 'We do not encourage white missionaries to work within our country.' It is their sentence. I am conveying to you as it was written. They did not wish the foreign missionaries to stay here. I think you got the point! What else could the government do then?"

Father was shocked for a while. Suddenly he could connect the link. He remembered that the incident at Sawarde had shaken the church. The establishment was rattled. There were some people there too who did not like his work. They appointed a committee. Consisting of four members. Father had almost a quarrel with them. He had tried his best to convince them but none of them would listen... Their dislike for this kind of work was clearly apparent. When Father had said to them, "This nation suffers from different problems.", one of them reacted caustically, "We don't need to hear this from foreigners." He was under the impression then that it must have been due to their dislike for his work. But now he realized suddenly that the reality was different!

Karhadkar looked at his watch after some time and got up. He shook hands with Father as he got up.

"I should make a move now," he said. "I met you very late but am happy that we met. One more thing. You can apply for a tourist visa any time. There won't be any difficulty. That will allow you multiple visits to India. And please do come. You will understand many things which were not understood earlier. I wish you a pleasant and happy journey. Goodbye."

He then left the restaurant tapping the heels of his shoes on to the floor.

Father kept staring at him for some time and then turned his eyes outside. The chain of events, like a motion film, passed swiftly before his eyes as he was looking outside. The colony in Sawarde. Those people with short built and dark complexions. Poor and sly. Suppressed and smiling. Loving and deceiving. The fiery sunlight on the plains there. The well. The clean, bright water of the canal flowing ahead in its own trance. That Anantrao with squinted eyes. The collector with gloomy eyes. That committee of four members holding bayonets. And the tall church tower in the blue sky.

He felt that all this was quite confusing and beyond his understanding. As rightly said by that officer. It rains from the sky, the grains spring from the earth and people live by the grains. But they have myriad ways of living. The life! Where does it come from? From the earth? Or from human beings? He never understood it. Perhaps he wouldn't be able to understand it in his lifetime.

His hand rested on the table. As he looked at it, he thought whether it was due to the difference in the colour. He covered his body with a white gown so as to hide the skin colour. Because white dissolves everything. But that is superficial. Like this gown. The colour inside never changes. It is never hidden even if covered. Or is it a punishment for his old sin? A punishment for the sin that was committed by him though unknowingly? He went on killing all those who were not like him. All those whose noses, colour, eyes were different from his own. Isn't it a penance for that action?

He was baffled completely. He thought it would have helped had the officer not told him this reality. Now he would never believe in the white colour. Henceforth he would examine the colour of the skin and eyes of a person wearing a white attire. He would first recognize the difference between himself and that man. He had sought refuge in this shelter so as not to be troubled by the differences in colour. But now that sanctuary was shattered. He did not own anything now that he could call his own - house, family or something that he would yearn for. The family that he had thought of being big was in fact very small. Like others, it also had the walls. He had wanted to live in this hot and earthly country. So that he could forget the old times, the history. He was hoping to find the light. But this land did not want him.

He kept looking outside, stunned and helpless. Evening was casting its spell. The surroundings so far clearly visible had

started darkening. Like a picture distancing itself from the vision. A grey whitish darkness was forcing itself everywhere. A yellow light blinked far on the horizon and then gradually the lights came on one by one. Father kept on staring... Shortly, he heard the announcement for boarding.

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